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ABSTRACT

The Detroit Public Schools High School Improvement Project (HSIP), a four-year program beginning with the 1981-82 school year, improved levels of student achievement in basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills at participating schools. Improvements were also a little greater than those at comparable non-participating schools. This final evaluation report on HSIP is presented in four parts: (1) a summary of evaluation findings concerning basic skill achievements, attendance, school climate, and process evaluation; (2) a detailed product evaluation, including evidence on basic skill achievements and attendance at project schools; (3) a school climate evaluation report for each of the participating schools; and (4) individual school process evaluation reports for the eight HSIP schools. The ultimate purpose of the process evaluations was to learn more about what makes for an effective local school. To that end, evaluations focused on the following questions: (1) what worked well? (2) what impeded progress? and (3) how could the process have been improved? The answers to those questions are included in the report. (PS)

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DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
1981 - 1985

EVALUATION REPORT

Prepared by

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Detroit Public Schools

November, 1985

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DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
1981 - 1985
EVALUATION REPORT

Introduction

When the HSIP (High School Improvement Project) was initiated in the 1981-82 school year, support staff assigned to each participating school's HSIP committee included an evaluation specialist from the school system's Evaluation and Testing Department. Throughout the four years of Project operation these evaluators worked closely with their respective school committees. They assisted in (1) the identification of school problems, (2) the study of research on effective schools, (3) evaluation of progress toward objectives in the school's HSIP plan, (4) school climate evaluation, and (5) process evaluation of HSIP activities.

This final evaluation report on the overall HSIP is presented in four parts. The first part is a summary of evaluation findings concerning basic skill achievements, attendance, school climate, and process evaluation.

Following the summary of findings, product evaluation results are reported in detail. This section presents evidence regarding basic skill achievements and attendance at Project schools. Findings concerning school holding power (dropout data) are discussed in a separate report.

The third part consists of individual school climate evaluation reports for all participating schools, and in the fourth part are individual school process evaluation reports for the eight HSIP schools.

Summary of Findings

Achievement Test Results

In general, results of the annual city-wide achievement tests administered in Detroit high schools show improved levels of Project school student achievement of basic reading, writing and mathematics skills since the inception of the Project. Test results also clearly indicate that reading, writing and mathematics skill improvements in the Project schools generally have been a little greater than those attained in comparable non-project schools. Although the most recent test results generally show that Project school levels of basic skill achievement are very slightly below those for non-project schools, they were further below previously.

While it is encouraging to see evidence that achievement gains in Project schools have been somewhat greater than those attained in non-project schools, it is important to note that, according to the latest norm-referenced test results, average levels of reading and mathematics achievement are still well below grade level in the Project schools. Clearly, more improvement is needed.

Attendance

A comparison of student attendance data for the 1984-85 school year with comparable data for 1982-83 revealed that the average rate of attendance for all HSIP schools combined improved slightly more than did the corresponding rate for all regular non-project high schools in Detroit.

School Climate

All eight Project schools had, as one of their goals, the improvement of the school's climate for teaching and learning. Although there was no

uniform design for a comprehensive evaluation of school climate in all schools, at every school some attention was devoted to the assessment of selected climate factors. The assessment was based on results of surveys of student and staff attitudes and perceptions regarding such factors as orderliness of school environment; relations among students, teachers and administrators; teacher expectations; and home-school relations. At some schools, a modified version of the Connecticut School Effectiveness Questionnaire was administered to staff members, and the Student Opinion Inventory (published by the National Study of School Evaluation) was administered to a student sample. At two schools only the Student Opinion Inventory was administered, and at two other schools student and staff questionnaires developed by the support evaluator were used. There was, also, considerable variation among Project schools as to how many times and when the surveys were administered.

As mentioned earlier, individual school reports on school climate evaluation for all eight HSIP schools are presented later in this report. An examination of these reports reveals much variation among schools with respect to findings. For every school there is evidence of some school climate improvement, but the schools differ greatly as to which particular climate factors showed improvement. Also, according to survey results, some schools improved on several climate variables, while others improved on few.

Because of the wide variation among the schools with respect to assessment instruments used and when they were administered, it is not possible to draw any firm overall conclusions about specific school climate improvements.

Process Evaluation Findings

Process evaluations of HSIP operations at each participating school were conducted to identify strengths, weaknesses, problems and unmet needs with respect to policies and procedures. The ultimate purpose of these evaluations was to learn more about what makes for an effective local school improvement program.

At each Project school the process evaluation was based, in part, on results of annual process evaluation questionnaires administered to HSIP committee members near the end of each school year. It was also based partly on findings of group interviews of committee members and individual interviews of several members. These interviews were conducted in May, 1985, at each Project school by the evaluator who served in support of the school committee.

The process evaluations focused on three basic questions:

1. What worked well? (What procedures and conditions were especially effective in promoting progress?)
2. What impeded progress? (What procedures, problems or conditions were troublesome?)
3. How could the process have been improved?

Based on results described in the eight individual school process evaluation reports, major findings related to these questions are summarized below. The statements under each question are listed in order from highest to lowest frequency of mention in the eight school reports. At the end of each statement in parentheses is the number of Project schools whose reports cited the essential substance of the statement.

What Worked Well?

1. Surveys of the total instructional staff were very helpful in identifying school problems. (7 schools)

2. Student surveys helped identify school problems. (6 schools)

3. The work of subcommittees of the school HSIP committee contributed greatly to productivity. (4 schools)

4. Continuity of key person membership on the school committee was conducive to progress. (4 schools)

5. The fact that several committee members were highly committed persons contributed greatly to committee effectiveness. (4 schools)

6. Active leadership and support by the principal fostered effective committee efforts. (4 schools)

7. A thorough study of school test results helped identify specific needs for instructional improvement. (4 schools)

8. Having a competent and committed school facilitator greatly enhanced committee achievements. (3 schools)

9. Committee member meetings with feeder middle school staff helped identify needs for improved articulation with the middle schools and facilitated planning to meet such needs. (3 schools)

10. Competent, dedicated persons from the region office and the Wayne County Intermediate School District, who served as support members of the school committee, made valuable contributions. (2 schools)

11. Opportunities for sharing ideas with other Project school committees (at special city-wide HSIP meetings) were highly beneficial. (2 schools)

12. Devoting some time at school department meetings to project concerns promoted involvement of the total staff. (2 schools)

13. Meetings arranged by the HSIP director to provide inservice education regarding school improvement efforts were helpful to school committee members. (2 schools)

What Impeded Progress?

1. Lack of enough time for the work of the committee and subcommittees (5 schools)

2. Too much talk, too little action, too much time on trivia -- (Concerns like these often resulted in frustration with perceived slowness of committee progress.) (5 schools)

3. Difficulty in reaching consensus on plans and decisions (5 schools)

4. Conflicts and disputes among committee members (4 schools)

5. Lack of follow-through on decisions (3 schools)

6. Perception that school administrators too often took a defensive position regarding proposed changes in school procedures and policies (3 schools)

7. Too many changes of the principal (3 schools)

8. Frequent changes in committee membership with few members continuing through the full four years (3 schools)

9. Poor attendance at committee meetings, often due to conflicting obligations to attend other school-related activities (3 schools)

10. Difficulty getting cooperation of total staff (3 schools)

11. Inadequate representation of some departments on the committee (2 schools)

12. Specific responsibilities and tasks not clearly identified (2 schools)

13. Too few committee meetings; one per month not enough (2 schools)

14. Committee meetings too often used as gripe sessions (2 schools)

How Could the Process Have Been Improved?

1. More school committee communication with total staff regarding objectives and plans (7 schools)

2. More parent involvement (5 schools)

3. More student involvement (5 schools)

4. Clearer definition of the facilitator's role (2 schools)

5. More staff agreement on the philosophy of the school (2 schools)

6. More study of research on effective schools and effective teachers (2 schools)

7. Stronger support from school administrators (2 schools)

Other noteworthy views on how the school HSIP program could have been improved (each cited in one school's report) included: (1) more opportunities to share ideas with other Project school committees, (2) provision for released time for some of the HSIP planning work, (3) making the facilitator position a full time job, (4) provision for a few staff planning days at the beginning of each school year, and (5) more visible support of the Project by top level school system administrators.

Product Evaluation Findings

The product evaluation of the HSIP focused mainly on basic skill achievements, student attendance, and school holding power. Evaluation findings concerning student achievement and attendance are presented below. Findings regarding school holding power are described in a separate report.

Achievement Test Results

A major goal of the Project was to improve student achievement in the basic skills, beginning initially (in 1981-82) with the ninth grade and subsequently including, in successive years, the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades. Evaluation findings concerning this goal are based on students' scores on four tests administered annually in all Detroit high schools: the Ninth Grade Test of Communication Skills, the Michigan Educational Assessment Program tests, the Detroit High School Proficiency Examination, and the California Achievement Test.

Ninth Grade Communication Skills Test Results

Detroit's objective-referenced Ninth Grade Communication Skills Test is administered to all Grade 9 students twice during each school year, as a pretest in early October, and as a posttest in late April. The test is designed to measure mastery of the following nine skills:

Reading Skills

1. Following written directions
2. Defining words in context
3. Identifying a main idea
4. Drawing a valid inference

Study Skills

1. Using a dictionary
2. Locating information in categorical listings

Writing Skills

1. Using correct capitalization and punctuation
2. Constructing a sentence
3. Organizing a paragraph

In Table 1 are presented Ninth Grade Communication Skills Test posttest results for the school years 1981-82 through 1984-85 for each Project school and for the city as a whole. An examination of the data reveals the following:

Comparisons between 1981-82 and 1984-85 percentages of Project school students mastering objectives

- Two schools showed increases in percentages of students mastering all nine objectives.
- Five schools showed increases in percentages mastering eight objectives.
- One school showed increases in mastery on seven objectives.

Comparisons between Project school and city-wide results with respect to increases between 1981-82 and 1984-85 in percents of students mastering objectives

- Three schools showed greater increases on seven objectives than the city-wide increases.
- Four schools showed greater increases on six objectives than the city-wide increases.
- One school showed greater increases on two objectives than the city-wide increases.

Although very few Project schools surpassed the city-wide percentages of students mastering individual objectives in 1984-85, it should be noted that, back in 1981-82, no Project school surpassed the city-wide percentage on four of the nine objectives, and on four other objectives only one Project school surpassed the city-wide percentage.

TABLE 1

Percents of Project School Grade 9 Students Attaining Mastery of Ninth Grade Communication Skills Test Objectives*

School and Year	Percents Of Students Mastering Objectives								
	Reading Skills				Study Skills		Writing Skills		
	Written Directions	Words in Context	Main Idea	Inference	Dictionary	Categor. Listing	Capital. and Punct.	Sentence Const.	Parag. Org.
Northern									
1981-82	85%	57%	58%	56%	44%	70%	43%	50%	70%
1982-83	90	65	63	55	57	78	43	57	70
1983-84	91	61	60	62	56	80	47	67	80
1984-85	89	66	59	57	48	80	54	57	81
Difference**	+ 4	+ 9	+ 1	+ 1	+ 4	+ 10	+ 11	+ 7	+ 11
Northwestern									
1981-82	88	60	63	60	52	79	49	54	78
1982-83	91	65	67	70	54	82	59	58	81
1983-84	90	65	69	65	58	83	54	66	79
1984-85	91	68	61	63	55	86	61	64	80
Difference**	+ 3	+ 8	- 2	+ 3	+ 3	+ 7	+ 12	+ 10	+ 2
Mackenzie									
1981-82	86	51	59	50	48	76	45	54	72
1982-83	93	72	78	77	70	92	80	82	91
1983-84	89	65	67	66	52	83	47	59	79
1984-85	90	70	66	67	63	79	58	65	76
Difference**	+ 4	+ 19	+ 7	+ 17	+ 15	+ 3	+ 13	+ 11	+ 4
Henry Ford									
1981-82	91	64	68	64	60	81	51	58	82
1982-83	92	63	70	66	60	83	59	65	79
1983-84	94	71	73	74	62	86	57	66	81
1984-85	94	72	74	75	57	86	57	63	83
Difference**	+ 3	+ 8	+ 6	+ 11	- 3	+ 5	+ 6	+ 5	+ 1
Mumford									
1981-82	94	73	73	65	57	81	52	62	78
1982-83	94	74	71	68	70	90	56	68	74
1983-84	93	72	78	75	67	92	54	70	84
1984-85	94	68	74	77	64	90	67	73	85
Difference**	0	- 5	+ 1	+ 12	+ 7	+ 9	+ 15	+ 11	+ 7

(more)

TABLE 1 (CONTINUED)

School and Year	Percents Of Students Mastering Objectives								
	Reading Skills				Study Skills		Writing Skills		
	Written Directions	Words in Context	Main Idea	Inference	Dictionary	Categor. Listing	Capital. and Punct.	Sentence Const.	Parag. Org.
Pershing									
1981-82	88%	59%	59%	53%	56%	79%	45%	54%	71%
1982-83	91	63	64	66	54	80	60	58	79
1983-84	89	61	64	63	51	77	56	57	76
1984-85	93	66	69	66	58	79	59	65	77
Difference**	+ 5	+ 7	+ 10	+ 13	+ 2	0	+ 14	+ 11	+ 6
Denby									
1981-82	92	62	64	63	56	79	53	60	75
1982-83	90	67	68	71	56	80	60	64	75
1983-84	92	66	69	66	52	86	54	61	78
1984-85	91	66	69	69	58	83	56	64	79
Difference**	- 1	+ 4	+ 5	+ 6	+ 2	+ 4	+ 3	+ 4	+ 4
Southeastern									
1981-82	85	54	54	33	45	70	39	43	66
1982-83	88	57	58	56	53	78	51	53	74
1983-84	87	59	57	54	46	78	51	53	70
1984-85	89	56	56	61	44	81	53	60	74
Difference**	+ 4	+ 2	+ 2	+ 28	- 1	+ 11	+ 14	+ 17	+ 8
City-Wide									
1981-82	91	65	68	66	59	83	56	63	79
1982-83	92	69	71	71	62	84	61	66	82
1983-84	92	69	71	70	61	85	59	66	83
1984-85	93	71	71	72	61	86	63	67	83
Difference**	+ 2	+ 6	+ 3	+ 6	+ 2	+ 3	+ 7	+ 4	+ 4

*The Ninth Grade Test of Communication Skills is administered to all ninth grade students twice every school year, as a pretest in October, and as a posttest in May. All results reported in this table are posttest results.

**Difference between 1984-85 and 1981-82 percentages

Michigan Educational Assessment Program Test Results

The Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) is a state-wide testing program designed to measure pupil achievements of basic reading and mathematics objectives. The MEAP tests are administered annually in October to all fourth, seventh, and tenth grade pupils in Michigan.

In Table 2 are presented 1982, 1983, and 1984 MEAP test results for the Project schools and for all of Detroit's regular non-project high schools combined. The results are reported in terms of percents of students mastering 75 percent of the tested objectives, a standard commonly regarded as an acceptable level of achievement. The data in Table 2 can be described as follows:

1. Between the 1982 and 1984 testings, seven Project schools showed increases in proportions of Grade 10 students attaining 75 percent of the reading objectives and one showed a slight decline. Five of the Project schools attained greater increases than that attained by the combined non-project schools.

2. Between 1982 and 1984, five Project schools showed increases in proportions of students attaining 75 percent of the mathematics objectives. For every one of these five schools, the increase was greater than that shown by the non-project schools. Two Project schools showed no change and one showed a decline in mathematics achievement.

3. For all Project schools combined, the proportion of students attaining 75 percent of the objectives increased by eight percent in reading, and by four percent in mathematics. In contrast, the non-project schools registered smaller gains of four percent in reading and one percent in mathematics.

4. Although results for all Project schools combined showed greater improvements on both reading and mathematics tests than were shown by non-project schools, in 1984 their levels of performance on both tests were still slightly lower than those attained at the non-project schools.

TABLE 2

Percents of Project School Grade 10 Students Attaining 75 Percent Or More of the MEAP* Reading and Mathematics Objectives 1982, 1983, and 1984

School	Percents of Students Attaining 75 Percent Or More of the MEAP Objectives							
	Reading				Mathematics			
	1982	1983	1984	Difference**	1982	1983	1984	Difference**
Northern	51%	50%	63%	+ 12%	32%	28%	35%	+ 3%
Northwestern	62	62	65	+ 3	28	35	28	0
Mackenzie	51	58	55	+ 4	21	26	28	+ 7
Henry Ford	40	58	61	+ 21	42	36	48	+ 6
Mumford	66	68	65	- 1	33	33	38	+ 5
Pershing	40	52	50	+ 10	29	32	29	0
Denby	55	56	67	+ 12	25	28	32	+ 7
Southeastern	46	41	55	+ 9	28	26	24	- 4
All Project Schools	52	57	60	+ 8	30	31	34	+ 4
All Regular Non-Project High Schools***	58	58	62	+ 4	34	33	35	+ 1

*Michigan Educational Assessment Program

**Difference between 1984 and 1982 percentages

***Regular non-project high schools include all non-project high schools except Cass and Renaissance which have special admission standards.

High School Proficiency Examination Results

The Detroit High School Proficiency Examination (HSPE) includes three tests of basic competencies--in reading, writing, and mathematics. All Detroit tenth graders take the HSPE in December each year. Those failing any of the tests may take them again in the eleventh grade and, if necessary, again in the twelfth grade.

In Table 3 are reported the percents of Project school tenth grade students who passed each of the HSPE tests in the school years 1981-82 through 1984-85, and comparable data for all regular non-project high schools combined.

The data in Table 3 reveal that between the 1981-82 and 1984-85 HSPE administrations:

1. six Project schools showed increases in percents of students passing the reading test, while one showed no change and one showed a decrease;
2. five Project schools showed increases in percents of students passing the writing test, one showed no change and two showed decreases; and
3. all eight Project schools showed increases in percents of students passing the mathematics test.

Table 3 data also indicate that, for all Project schools combined, increases in percents of students passing all three tests were greater than corresponding increases for the non-project high schools. It should be noted, however, that in 1984-85 the Project schools combined still had slightly lower percents of Grade 10 students passing each HSPE test than had the non-project high schools.

California Achievement Test Results

Prior to the 1984-85 school year, the California Achievement Test (CAT) tests of reading and mathematics were administered annually in April to all

TABLE 3

Percents of Project School Grade 10 Students Who Passed
The High School Proficiency Examination Tests
1981-82 Through 1984-85

School	Percents Of Students Passing Tests														
	Reading					Writing					Mathematics				
	81-82	82-83	83-84	84-85	Difference *	81-82	82-83	83-84	84-85	Difference *	81-82	82-83	83-84	84-85	Difference *
Northern	59%	64%	71%	71%	+ 12%	45%	52%	48%	53%	+ 8%	18%	35%	27%	40%	+ 22%
Northwestern	72	76	78	81	+ 9	57	60	57	69	+ 12	28	36	33	43	+ 15
Mackenzie	73	68	76	76	+ 3	57	54	55	58	+ 1	31	34	34	36	+ 5
Henry Ford	82	82	80	82	0	65	64	59	65	0	32	51	42	46	+ 14
Mumford	76	75	78	80	+ 4	58	57	57	65	+ 7	24	36	35	38	+ 14
Pershing	63	62	72	71	+ 8	43	45	55	58	+ 15	20	31	37	40	+ 20
Denby	74	75	72	76	+ 2	62	63	55	59	- 3	29	44	37	41	+ 12
Southeastern	69	69	65	66	- 3	51	47	45	44	- 7	25	41	35	33	+ 8
All Project Schools	72	72	75	76	+ 4	55	56	55	60	+ 5	26	39	35	40	+ 14
All Regular Non-Project High Schools**	76	76	77	77	+ 1	59	59	57	61	+ 2	29	41	36	41	+ 12

*Difference between 1984-85 and 1981-82 percentages

**Regular non-project high schools include all non-project high schools except Cass and Renaissance which have special admission standards.

Grade 11A students in Detroit's public schools. In the 1984-85 year these tests were administered in November to all 11B students. In Tables 4 and 5, respectively, are presented CAT reading and mathematics test results for the school years 1982-83 through 1984-85 for all Project schools and for all regular non-project schools combined. The reading test results are based on scores on the CAT Reading Comprehension Test. The mathematics results are based on combined scores from two CAT tests, the Mathematics Computation Test and the Mathematics Concepts and Applications Test.

Since the norm-referenced CAT tests were not administered at the same time of the year in all three years reported, comparisons between 1984-85 and 1982-83 results discussed below are based on differences between grade equivalent means and national norms.

Reference to the data for Northern High School in Table 4 will provide an example of a comparison. In the 1982-83 year Northern's reading test GE (grade equivalent) score mean was 9.1, or 2.6 GE units (or years) below the national norm. In the 1984-85 year the school's mean GE score was 9.5, or 1.7 GE units below the national norm. Thus the average level of reading achievement improved from 2.6 years below grade level to only 1.7 years below--a gain of .9 years.

Some observations based on the CAT results follow.

Reading Test Results (See Table 4)

1. Comparisons of 1984-85 with 1982-83 results reveal that six Project schools showed improvements in level of reading achievement, while two schools showed declines.

2. Between the 1982-83 and 1984-85 years, the average reading achievement level for all Project schools combined improved by four months (in GE units), while it rose by three months in the non-project schools.

TABLE 4

Means of CAT* Reading Test Scores of Grade 11 Students
In the Project Schools Compared to National Norms
1982-83, 1983-84, and 1984-85

School	Means of Reading Test Grade Equivalent Scores, National Norms and Differences								
	1982-83			1983-84			1984-85		
	Mean	Nat. Norm	Difference**	Mean	Nat. Norm	Difference**	Mean	Nat. Norm	Difference**
Northern	9.1	11.7	- 2.6	9.5	11.7	- 2.2	9.5	11.2	- 1.7
Northwestern	9.9	11.7	- 1.8	10.1	11.7	- 1.6	8.9	11.2	- 2.3
Mackenzie	10.2	11.7	- 1.5	9.7	11.7	- 2.0	9.6	11.2	- 1.6
Henry Ford	9.6	11.7	- 2.1	10.3	11.7	- 1.4	10.1	11.2	- 1.1
Mumford	9.9	11.7	- 1.8	10.1	11.7	- 1.6	9.9	11.2	- 1.3
Pershing	9.3	11.7	- 2.4	9.3	11.7	- 2.4	9.0	11.2	- 2.2
Denby	9.7	11.7	- 2.0	10.0	11.7	- 1.7	9.8	11.2	- 1.4
Southeastern	9.5	11.7	- 2.2	9.5	11.7	- 2.2	9.2	11.2	- 2.0
All Project Schools	9.7	11.7	- 2.0	9.8	11.7	- 1.9	9.6	11.2	- 1.6
All Regular Non-Project High Schools***	9.7	11.7	- 2.0	10.0	11.7	- 1.7	9.5	11.2	- 1.7

*California Achievement Test

**Difference between school means and national norms. Note that national norm in 1984-85 differs from that of the previous two years because the CAT was administered much earlier in the 1984-85 school year.

***Regular non-project high schools include all non-project high schools except Cass and Renaissance which have special admission standards.

TABLE 5

Means of CAT* Mathematics Test Scores of Grade 11 Students
In the Project Schools Compared to National Norms
1982-83, 1983-84, and 1984-85

School	Means of Mathematics Test Grade Equivalent Scores, National Norms and Differences								
	1982-83			1983-84			1984-85		
	Mean	Nat. Norm	Difference**	Mean	Nat. Norm	Difference**	Mean	Nat. Norm	Difference**
Northern	9.9	11.7	- 1.8	9.9	11.7	- 1.8	9.9	11.2	- 1.3
Northwestern	10.0	11.7	- 1.7	10.3	11.7	- 1.4	9.3	11.2	- 1.9
Mackenzie	10.1	11.7	- 1.6	10.3	11.7	- 1.4	10.3	11.2	- .9
Henry Ford	10.5	11.7	- 1.2	11.3	11.7	- .4	10.9	11.2	- .3
Mumford	10.3	11.7	- 1.4	10.7	11.7	- 1.0	10.5	11.2	- .7
Pershing	9.7	11.7	- 2.0	10.3	11.7	- 1.4	10.0	11.2	- 1.2
Denby	9.8	11.7	- 1.9	10.2	11.7	- 1.5	10.4	11.2	- .8
Southeastern	10.6	11.7	- 1.1	10.4	11.7	- 1.3	10.2	11.2	- 1.0
All Project Schools	10.1	11.7	- 1.6	10.5	11.7	- 1.2	10.3	11.2	- .9
All Regular Non-Project High Schools***	10.4	11.7	- 1.3	10.6	11.7	- 1.1	10.5	11.2	- .7

*California Achievement Test

**Difference between school means and national norms. Note that national norm in 1984-85 differs from that of the previous two years because the CAT was administered much earlier in the 1984-85 school year.

***Regular non-project high schools include all non-project high schools except Cass and Renaissance which have special admission standards.

3. In the 1984-85 year the average level of reading achievement for all Project schools combined was one month higher than that for the non-project schools.

4. In the 1984-85 year average levels of reading achievement were below grade level for all Project schools and for the non-project schools.

Mathematics Test Results (See Table 5)

1. Between 1982-83 and 1984-85 seven Project schools showed improvements in average level of mathematics achievement, while only one school declined.

2. Between 1982-83 and 1984-85 the average level of mathematics achievement for all Project schools combined improved by seven months, while it rose by six months in the non-project schools.

3. In the 1984-85 year the average level of mathematics achievement for all Project schools was two months below that for the non-project schools.

4. In the 1984-85 year average levels of mathematics achievement were below grade level for all Project schools and for the non-project schools.

Attendance

In Table 6 are presented average daily attendance data for the eight Project schools and for all regular non-project high schools combined. Average daily attendance is reported for the first semesters of the school years 1982-83, 1983-84, and 1984-85 and for the second semesters of the same school years.

The data in Table 6 support the following statements about Project school attendance:

1. Four Project schools showed improved attendance in the first semester, 1984-85, compared to that of the first semester, 1982-83, while the other four Project schools showed a decline.

TABLE 6

Average Daily Attendance in Project Schools*
1982-85

School	Average Daily Percents of Students Attending School							
	First Semesters				Second Semesters			
	82-83	83-84	84-85	Difference	82-83	83-84	84-85	Difference
Northern	78.1%	78.8%	82.7%	+ 4.6%	76.5%	83.5%	94.8%	+ 18.3%
Northwestern	81.9	81.2	82.8	+ .9	79.1	84.5	84.1	+ 5.0
Mackenzie	77.8	80.6	79.1	+ 1.3	79.4	84.2	93.0	+ 13.6
Henry Ford	83.8	82.3	82.9	- .9	84.6	86.0	84.4	- .2
Mumford	85.9	86.2	84.9	- 1.0	84.6	89.6	84.9	+ .3
Pershing	75.4	80.4	81.1	+ 5.7	75.6	84.3	82.7	+ 7.1
Denby	82.8	80.9	79.8	- 3.0	80.4	85.5	81.5	+ 1.1
Southeastern	80.2	77.1	78.5	- 1.7	75.6	77.4	78.1	+ 2.5
All Project Schools	80.9	81.3	81.4	.5	79.9	85.0	85.1	5.2
All Regular Non-Project High Schools**	81.9	80.7	80.9	- 1.0	81.0	84.9	82.5	1.5

*For each of the six semesters reported average daily attendance is based on student attendance records for the first half of the semester. Attendance data were obtained from the Information Systems Office.

**Regular non-project high schools include all non-project high schools except Cass and Renaissance which have special admission standards.

2. Seven Project schools showed improved attendance in the second semester, 1984-85, compared to that of the second semester, 1982-83.

3. First semester attendance for all Project schools combined increased very slightly (by 0.5 percent) in 1984-85 compared to the rate in 1982-83, while non-project school attendance declined 1.0 percent.

4. Second semester attendance for all Project schools combined increased by 5.2 percent in 1984-85 over the rate in 1982-83, while non-project school attendance increased by 1.5 percent.

5. In both semesters of 1984-85 the attendance rates for all Project schools combined were higher than the corresponding rates for the non-project schools.

PTR/fc

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

NORTHERN HIGH SCHOOL

Arnold Fisher

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION REPORT
HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Northern High School

In the fall of 1984 and again in the spring of 1985 surveys of student council members in all four high school grades were conducted. At the same times staff surveys were completed by the Northern High School faculty. The results of these sets of surveys serve as the source of information for this report.

The report seeks to answer these two questions: (1) What evidence indicates improvement in school climate? and (2) What are the strengths and weaknesses in school climate?

Unit of Analysis

School climate as used here refers to those components of a school's institutional patterns and behavioral practices to be measured by the two survey instruments.[1] The student questionnaire contains 34 questions with five response choices per question. The staff questionnaire has a total of 48 statements each having five response choices. For purposes of analysis and discussion, the 34 student questions are sorted into six school descriptive categories, and similarly, the 48 staff statements are grouped into eight school effectiveness categories. The number of items per category ranged between three and eight. The percents of subjects answering positively or favorably were aggregated and an average was computed for each category of items in both data sets.

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[1]Student instrument used was the "Student Opinion Inventory," Falls Church, Virginia: National Study of School Evaluation, 1981; the staff instrument was a revision by JoAnne E. Moore and Denny Stavros (1982) of the "School Effectiveness Questionnaire," Hartford, Connecticut: Connecticut State Department of Education, 1981

The unit of measurement used in the analysis below is the average of the percent answering favorably for each of the six student and eight staff categories.

The six student survey categories are: student activities, instruction, curriculum, guidance and counseling, school morale, and school administration.

The eight staff survey categories are: Safe and Orderly Environment, Clear School Mission, Instructional Leadership of the Principal and Department Heads, High Expectations, Opportunity to Learn and Student Time-On Task, Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress, and Home-School Relations.

Survey Results

Student perceptions of school climate changed positively between October 1984 and May 1985 on all of the six school descriptive categories. Means of percents of students responding favorably increased as follows:

Student Activities: plus 10 percentage points

Instruction: plus 9 percentage points

Curriculum: plus 3 percentage points

Guidance and Counseling: plus 15 percentage points

School Morale: plus 13 percentage points

School Administration: plus 20 percentage points

According to student responses on the second survey the most change occurred in the perception of positive change in School Administration with a rise of 20 percentage points. The area of Curriculum showed the least gain with virtually no change over the year in three of the five questions. Student perception of the quality of instruction showed a nine point gain, yet, answers to the questions, "How many teachers make sure you understand?"

and "How many teachers are willing to give help outside of class time?" evidenced no change.

In the final survey a narrow range of students evaluating school characteristics favorably was evidenced. It was from 51 percent for Administration to 63 percent for Guidance and Counseling.

The picture that emerged from the staff responses was much less indicative of perceived improvements in school climate. For four of the eight school effectiveness categories (Instructional Leadership; Department Head Instructional Leadership; Principal, Home-School Relations and Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress), there was no change or a decrease between 1984 and 1985 in the average percents of teachers answering favorably. See differences below:

Safe and Orderly Environment: plus 9 percentage points

Clear School Mission: plus 2 percentage points

Instructional Leadership-Dept. Head: minus 4 percentage points

Instructional Leadership-Principal: minus 4 percentage points

High Expectations: plus 4 percentage points

Opportunity to Learn and Student Time on Task: plus 15 percentage points

Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress: no change

Home-School Relations: no change

The staff viewed the category of Opportunity to Learn and Time on Task as a major school climate strength. An average of 68 percent responded favorably to the five questions grouped in this category in the latter survey.

At the lower end of school climate continuum on the 1985 survey was the Home-School Relations category, of seven items, with an average of 48 percent responding favorably and the High Expectation category with a positive staff response percentage of only 41 percent to the five items.

Between 56 and 64 percent of staff answered favorably for the Safe and Orderly Environment, Clear School Mission, Instructional Leadership of Dept. Heads and Principal and Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress categories.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

NORTHWESTERN HIGH SCHOOL

Denny Stavros, Ph.D.

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION REPORT
HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Northwestern High School
1981 - 1985

During the course of the four years that the High School Improvement Project (HSIP) operated at Northwestern High School, four annual end-of-the-year surveys were conducted using randomly selected samples of students from all four grades, and three annual end-of-the-year surveys were completed with the total faculty and administration sampled. The results of these two sets of annual surveys serve as the sources of information from which this report is written.

This report seeks to answer two questions: (1) What evidence indicates improvement in school climate? and (2) At the end of the four years, what are the strengths and weaknesses in school climate?

Units of Analysis

While school climate is an all encompassing concept, as used here it refers to those components of a school's institutional patterns and behavioral practices[1] that were measured by the two survey instruments.[2] The student questionnaire contained 34 questions with five response choices per question. The staff questionnaire had a total of 48 statements together with five response choices. Two of the five response choices on both instruments were by definition positive. For purposes of analysis and discussion, the 34

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[1]See Lawrence W. Lezotte, et al, School Learning Climate and Student Achievement, Tallahasse, Florida: Florida State University, 1980, p. 4.

[2]Student instrument used was the "Student Opinion Inventory," Falls Church, Virginia: National Study of School Evaluation, 1981; the staff instrument was a revision by Denny Stavros and JoAnne E. Moore (1982) of the "School Effectiveness Questionnaire," Hartford, Connecticut: Connecticut State Department of Education, 1981.

student questions were sorted into six school descriptor categories, and similarly, the 48 staff statements were grouped into eight school effectiveness categories. The number of items per category ranged between three and eight. The percents answering positively or favorably were aggregated and an average was computed for each category of items for both data sets. The unit of measurement used in the analysis below is the average of the percent answering favorably for each of the six student and eight staff categories.

The six student school descriptor categories are: student activities, instruction, curriculum, guidance and counseling, school morale, and school administration.

The eight staff school effectiveness categories are: safe and orderly environment, clear school mission, instructional leadership of the principal, instructional leadership of department heads, high expectations, opportunity to learn and student time-on-task, frequent monitoring of student progress, and home-school relations.

What Improvements in School Climate Were Evidenced

Student perceptions of school climate remained fairly constant, over time. On four of the six school descriptor categories, differences between the 1982 and the 1985 means of the percents of students answering favorably varied by no more than, plus or minus, three percentage points. There was, however, an apparent decline in favorable student appraisal with the guidance and counseling and the school morale categories. In the case of the former, there was a decrease from 62 percent to 54 percent in the average of favorable student ratings. For the latter, the decrease was from 66 percent to 61 percent.

The picture that emerged from the staff responses was much more indicative of perceived improvements in school climate, over time. For three of the eight school effectiveness categories (safe and orderly environment, home-school relations, high expectations), there was an increase in the average percents of teachers answering favorably between 1983 and 1985. Differences in means for each of the first two categories was 12 percentage points; for the third category, the difference was 17 percentage points. For each of the five remaining school effectiveness categories, the difference between 1983 and 1985 means was no more than, plus or minus, three percentage points.

School Climate Strengths and Weaknesses

According to student responses on the last end-of-the-year survey, curriculum and school morale ranked highest as school climate strengths from among the six school descriptor categories. Sixty-three percent of the students, on the average, responded favorably to curriculum questions, and an average of sixty percent responded favorably to school morale questions.

Instruction and guidance and counseling ranked moderately high as school climate strengths with an average of over half of the students evaluating aspects of these school characteristics favorably.

At the lower end of school climate strengths ranked school activities. Just under half of the students responded favorably to items in this category.

The one weakness that was consistently so through four surveys was school administration. Only an average of one-third of the students evaluated school administration questions favorably.

The staff viewed the instructional leadership of department heads as the major school climate strength. An average sixty-three percent responded favorably to the seven questions grouped in this category.

Opportunity to learn and student time-on-task, home-school relations, frequent monitoring of student progress, and safe and orderly environment were also identified as school climate strengths. Between fifty-three and fifty-five percent, on the average, answered favorably on the questions related to these four categories.

At the lower end of school climate strengths was the instructional leadership of the principal. Just under half of the staff responded favorably to items measuring the principal's instructional leadership.

Two school effectiveness categories were apparently school climate weaknesses. Only an average of forty-four percent answered favorably to the school mission question, and just over one-third, on the average, responded favorably to high expectations' items.

DS/fc:9/85

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

MACKENZIE HIGH SCHOOL

Carolyn Brown

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

MACKENZIE SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION

Introduction

The Detroit Public Schools' High School Improvement Project leadership decided that school climate was a high priority.

At Mackenzie High School, the administration, faculty, support staff and students focused on two major areas for improvement: (1) building educational structures intended to provide a stable, achieving school climate; and (2) programs and activities designed to both enrich the curriculum for all students and to meet some specific educational and social needs of individual students. Major features of school climate improvement strategies included school pride, school security plan, student attendance, and student activities.

School Pride

In their effort to achieve stable school climate, Mackenzie High Schools' staff communicated these messages to parents, friends and community persons:

1. Mackenzie is a pleasant, safe school for study, work and recreation.
2. The faculty cares about Mackenzie.
3. Mackenzie students take pride in their school.
4. Mackenzie values its public image.

School Security Plan

The administration, faculty, parents, students and community persons worked to develop a School Security Plan to include the following measures:

1. Provisions for enforcing the Uniform Student Code of Conduct.
2. Provisions for eliminating loitering outside and inside the building during the school day.
3. A faculty-student-community team work approach was executed to monitor the halls, stairways and lavatories in the building to guard against damage, theft and other forms of abuse.

Student Attendance

Mackenzie staff felt student behavior was one of their top priorities. Therefore, special attention was given to improving student attendance and punctuality. Teachers helped students develop good work-study skills, expand their reasoning abilities and encouraged them to work in class and complete all homework assignments.

Laboratories in both reading and mathematics are available for students who need extra practice in skill development.

Student Activities

The faculty, in cooperation with community volunteers, sponsered 34 student activities designed for enrichment and service. Mackenzie students also participated in field trips to cultural, social, educational and business institutions.

The Mackenzie School Climate Evaluation is presented in two parts; Part I discusses the Student Opinion Inventory and the results and Part II discusses the responses of the Mackenzie High School staff on the School Effectiveness Questionnaire.

Part I, Student Opinion Inventory Results

The Student Opinion Inventory survey instrument has 34 questions with five response choices per question. For purpose of analysis and discussion, the climate elements (26 questions) were taken from the following categories: (1) STUDENT-PARTICIPATION, (2) STUDENT-TEACHER, (3) STUDENT-COUNSELOR, (4) STUDENT-ADMINISTRATION, (5) STUDENT-CURRICULUM and INSTRUCTION, (6) STUDENT-SCHOOL IMAGE.

The Student Opinion Inventory was designed to assess student attitudes toward many facets of the school.

At Mackenzie High School, the Student Opinion Inventory was administered to a sample of 275 ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade students in English classes during the month of May, 1984. In May of 1985, the same inventory was administered to a sample of 476 ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade students in English classes.

The 26 climate element questions were selected because they measure students' perceptions of climate at Mackenzie. Table 1 provides means in percents of student respondents during 1983-84 and 1984-85. The percentage data are based on the two highest levels of attainment responses for each question in each of the six descriptor categories. A sample of highest level responses on the Student Opinion Inventory includes: Very Favorable-Favorable, All-Many, All-Most, and Always-Usually.

A brief description of the six categories follows:

Student-Teacher

This subscale measures how students perceive their teacher's behavior.

Student-Counselor

This subscale measures helpfulness of the counselors to the students.

Student-Administration

This subscale measures how students perceive their schools' administration's behavior.

Student-Curriculum and Instruction

This subscale measures the students' perception of the curriculum, teacher methods, learning and it's relevance to everyday living.

Student-Participation

This subscale measures the students' perception of his involvement in student activities.

TABLE 1
MEAN OF THE PERCENTS OF STUDENTS RESPONDING
FAVORABLY PER SCHOOL CLIMATE DESCRIPTOR
1983-1985

Descriptor	Number of Questions	Number of Respondents 83-84	Number of Respondents 84-85	Means of the Percent Responding Favorably 83-84	Means of the Percent Responding Favorably 84-85	Difference
STUDENT-PARTICIPATION	5	274	474	43	46	+3
STUDENT-TEACHER	7	275	476	53	55	+2
STUDENT-COUNSELOR	2	274	475	42	47	+5
STUDENT-ADMINISTRATION	5	271	473	34	33	-1
STUDENT-CURRICULUM and INSTRUCTION	1	271	474	57	60	+3
STUDENT-SCHOOL IMAGE	6	266	471	53	59	+6

Student-School Image

This subscale measures "school spirit" and student satisfaction with a variety of subjects, activities and quality of both.

The climate element responses on the Student Opinion Inventory showed a slight improvement in five of the six school descriptor categories. The most favorable categories for students on the Student Opinion Inventory were STUDENT-CURRICULUM and INSTRUCTION with an average of 60 percent (60%) of the responses being favorable and STUDENT-SCHOOL IMAGE with an average of 59 percent (59%) of the responses being favorable. STUDENT-ADMINISTRATION was the weakest area with an average of 33 percent (33%) of the responses being favorable. Student responses for half of the descriptors had favorable mean responses of 55 percent (55%) or higher.

Part II, Staff Survey Results

The School Effectiveness Questionnaire, High School Edition, was administered in May, 1984, to 102 Mackenzie High School staff members.

The School Effectiveness Questionnaire, High School Edition is a modification of The Connecticut School Effectiveness Questionnaire. The Detroit modifications preserved the basic structure of the instrument while focusing the content on areas unique to Detroit schools.

The Connecticut School Effectiveness Questionnaire was constructed to assess school effectiveness on seven characteristics. The seven characteristics followed by a brief description are: SAFE and ORDERLY ENVIRONMENT, (2) CLEAR SCHOOL MISSION, (3) INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP, (4) HIGH EXPECTATIONS, (5) OPPORTUNITY to LEARN and STUDENT TIME-ON-TASK, (6) FREQUENT MONITORING of STUDENT PROGRESS, and (7) HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS.

Safe and Orderly Environment

There is an orderly, purposeful atmosphere which is free from the threat of physical harm. However, the atmosphere is not oppressive and is conducive to teaching and learning.

Clear School Mission

There is a clearly articulated mission for the school through which the staff shares an understanding of and a commitment to instructional goals, priorities, assessment procedures and accountability.

Instructional Leadership

The principal and the various department heads act as instructional leaders who effectively communicate the mission of the school to the staff, parents and students, and who understand and apply the characteristics of instructional effectiveness in the management of the instructional program of the school.

High Expectations

The school displays a climate of expectation in which the staff believes and demonstrates that students can attain mastery of basic skills, and that they (the staff) have the capability to help students achieve such mastery.

Opportunity to Learn and Student Time-On-Task

Teachers allocate a significant amount of classroom time to instruction in basic skill areas. For a high percentage of that allocated time, students are engaged in planned learning activities.

Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress

Feedback on student academic progress is frequently obtained. Multiple assessment methods, such as teacher-made tests, samples of students' work, mastery skills checklists, criterion-referenced tests and norm-referenced tests are used. The results of testing are used to improve individual student performance and, also, to improve the instructional program.

Home-School Relations

Parents understand and support the basic mission of the school and are made to feel that they have an important role in achieving this mission.

Table 2 provides means of percents of staff respondents. The mean data are based on the two high levels of attainment responses for each question for each characteristic.

The two highest level (positive) responses on the School Effectiveness Questionnaire are Agree and Strongly Agree.

The results as a whole are relatively positive. See Table 2. Over sixty percent (60%) of staff respondents indicated there is a clearly articulated mission for the school (CLEAR SCHOOL MISSION); a significant amount of classroom time is allocated for instruction of basic skills (OPPORTUNITY to LEARN and STUDENT TIME-ON-TASK); and student progress is monitored frequently (FREQUENT MONITORING of STUDENT PROGRESS). Over seventy percent (70%) of staff respondents indicated that instructional leadership was effective (INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP - Department Head). Staff responses for six of the eight characteristics had favorable mean responses of 57 percent (57%) or higher. The weakest characteristic was SAFE and ORDERLY ENVIRONMENT with favorably mean responses of 44 percent (44%).

Conclusion

The Mackenzie school climate evaluation data indicate there has been slight improvement in five of the six descriptors for student responses. STUDENT-ADMINISTRATION received the least positive assessment.

In the staff survey, six categories were assessed positively (ranging from 57 percent to 73 percent). SAFE and ORDERLY ENVIRONMENT received the least positive assessment.

Mackenzie has made a dedicated commitment to improve the quality of its climate. The instructional leadership continues to make strides and pride is taken in all achievements. The administration, staff, students and community

TABLE 2
MEAN OF THE PERCENTS OF STAFF RESPONDING
FAVORABLY ON THE SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS QUESTIONNAIRE
1984

Characteristics	Number of Questions	Number of Respondents	Means of the Percent Responding Favorably
SAFE and ORDERLY ENVIRONMENT	8	102	44
CLEAR SCHOOL MISSION	3	102	64
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP (Principal)	8	102	57
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP (Department Head)	7	102	73
HIGH EXPECTATIONS	5	102	46
OPPORTUNITY to LEARN and STUDENT TIME-ON-TASK	5	102	66
FREQUENT MONITORING of STUDENT PROGRESS	5	102	67
HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS	7	102	57

volunteers shared in the effort to improve Mackenzie High School. The evaluator feels the gains made will continue to show improvement and the leadership will employ the most effective initiatives to build a healthy productive school climate at Mackenzie.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

HENRY FORD HIGH SCHOOL

Paul T. Rankin

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Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL CLIMATE AT HENRY FORD HIGH SCHOOL

Introduction

One of the goals of the High School Improvement Project was to improve the school climate for learning at participating schools. In the case of Henry Ford High School, although a comprehensive evaluation of school climate was not conducted, some pertinent evidence was obtained from results of a student survey administered three times during the four year life of the project.

Near the ends of the first, third and fourth years (1981-82, 1983-84 and 1984-85) the "Student Opinion Inventory," published by the National Study of School Evaluation, was administered to representative samples of the student enrollment at Ford. Results provide some indications of school climate strengths and weaknesses, and some evidence as to whether or not the climate improved.

Student Survey Results

Presented below are results for selected questions in the "Student Opinion Inventory" which concern important school climate factors. For each question the percentage distributions of responses are reported for the three administrations of the survey. Following these response data are some comments by way of interpretation.

Feeling of Belonging

Question 2. In how many of the activities of your school would you feel that you would be accepted?

	1982	1984	1985
A. All	11%	14%	11%
B. Most	33	38	37
C. About half	29	27	26
D. Few	25	19	22
E. None	2	2	4

The response data for 1985 show a very slight increase over those for 1982 in percent of students who felt they would be accepted in All or Most school activities. In 1985 about half of the students answered All or Most and 26 percent said Few or None.

Question 4. How often do you feel that you "belong" in your school?

	1982	1984	1985
A. Always	35%	39%	35%
B. Usually	25	28	25
C. About half the time	18	18	16
D. Seldom	17	12	18
E. Never	5	4	6

The distribution of student responses in 1985 was virtually identical to that for 1982. In 1985, six of every ten students reported Usually or Always feeling that they belonged. However 24 percent indicated that they Seldom or Never felt that way.

Teacher Attitudes Toward Students

Question 6. How many of your teachers seem to care if you learn the subject they teach?

	1982	1984	1985
A. All	24%	22%	21%
B. Most	25	35	35
C. About half	21	22	19
D. Few	26	20	23
E. None	4	1	3

In 1985, 56 percent of the responding students indicated that Most or All of their teachers seemed to care if they learned. This represented a seven percent increase over the comparable figure for 1982. However, also in 1985, about one of every four students reported that Few or None seemed to care.

Question 8. How much help do your teachers usually give you with your schoolwork?

	1982	1984	1985
A. All the help I need	17%	18%	17%
B. Most of the help I need	34	42	42
C. About half the help I need	26	20	24
D. A little of the help I need	20	20	15
E. None of the help I need	3	1	3

Between 1982 and 1985 there was an eight percent increase in students indicating that their teachers gave them most or all of the help they needed. In 1985, while six of every ten said their teachers gave most or all the help needed, 18 percent indicated that only a little or none of the needed help was given.

Question 9. How many of your teachers make sure you understand what they teach in class?

	1982	1984	1985
A. All	18%	18%	18%
B. Most	29	36	36
C. About half	24	24	23
D. Few	27	22	21
E. None	2	1	3

In the 1985 survey 54 percent of the students said that All or Most of their teachers made sure they understood what was taught. This represented a seven percent increase over the corresponding figure for 1982. Also in 1985, however, 24 percent replied Few or None.

Question 11. How many of your teachers are willing to give students individual help outside of class time?

	1982	1984	1985
A. All	14%	14%	13%
B. Most	22	27	25
C. About half	19	19	18
D. Few	32	33	38
E. None	13	7	7

In 1985 only 38 percent of the respondents reported that All or Most of their teachers were willing to help students outside of class time, while 45 percent said that Few or None were willing to do so. The response distribution for 1985 showed little change from that for 1982.

Question 12. How many of your teachers give you enough personal encouragement in your schoolwork?

	1982	1984	1985
A. All	7%	7%	6%
B. Most	18	18	19
C. About half	20	24	22
D. Few	38	38	39
E. None	17	13	16

In 1985 only one of every four students indicated that All or Most of their teachers gave them enough personal encouragement, while 45 percent reported that Few or None did so. The 1985 response percentages showed very little change from those for 1982.

Counselor Treatment of Students

Question 15. In general, are you satisfied with the way you are treated by your counselor?

	1982	1984	1985
A. Very satisfied	31%	32%	22%
B. Satisfied	24	25	31
C. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	22	20	19
D. Dissatisfied	13	10	13
E. Very dissatisfied	10	13	15

In 1985 a little over half (53 percent) of the respondents reported their satisfaction with treatment by their counselors, while 28 percent indicated dissatisfaction in this regard. Differences between the 1985 and 1982 were generally small, but there was a nine percent decline in the Very Satisfied responses, while the Satisfied response percentage increased by seven percent.

Attitude Toward the School

Question 30. How would your rate "school spirit" at your school? Consider students support of athletic teams, charity drives, class money-raising projects, etc.

	1982	1984	1985
A. Excellent	24%	24%	21%
B. Good	37	40	42
C. Adequate	31	26	25
D. Poor	5	7	8
E. Very Poor	3	2	4

In 1985 school spirit was rated Good or Excellent by nearly two-thirds of the students, Poor or Very Poor by only 12 percent. The 1985 response data showed little change from those for 1982.

Question 31. In general, are you satisfied with your school?

	1982	1984	1985
A. Very satisfied	7%	11%	6%
B. Satisfied	39	40	39
C. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	36	31	33
D. Dissatisfied	12	12	15
E. Very dissatisfied	6	6	7

In 1985 satisfaction with their school was reported by 45 percent of the respondents, dissatisfaction by 22 percent. Differences between 1985 and 1982 response distributions were minor.

Question 34. How satisfied are you with the quality of student activities that your school offers?

	1982	1984	1985
A. Very satisfied	10%	11%	8%
B. Satisfied	41	38	41
C. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	34	35	34
D. Dissatisfied	10	13	12
E. Very dissatisfied	5	3	6

In 1985 about half (49 percent) of the students indicated satisfaction with the quality of student activities offered, while 18 percent reported dissatisfaction. These response tendencies differed little from those for 1982.

Discussion

The above-reported student survey results are a mixture of positive and negative findings regarding school climate at Henry Ford High School. They include some positive indications of favorable conditions and a few signs of improvement. They also include several negative findings which seem to indicate needs for improvement.

It is heartening to note that majority of students apparently feel a sense of belonging at Ford. However, there is evidence, too, that one of every four seldom feel they belong.

In the area of teacher attitudes toward students, it is encouraging to note that majorities of student respondents felt that most or all of their teachers cared if they learned and strived to make sure their students

understood what was taught. A majority also reported that their teachers gave them most or all of the help they needed on schoolwork. It is also encouraging to note that on each of these three measures of teacher attitudes the 1985 survey results indicated some improvement over 1982 findings. It must also be noted, though, that substantial numbers of students responded negatively on all three measures.

The most disappointing of all the survey findings was that, in 1985: (1) 45 percent of the respondents judged that few or none of their teachers were willing to give students individual help outside of class time, and (2) 55 percent indicated that few or none of their teachers gave them enough personal encouragement in their schoolwork.

The positive evidence that a slight majority of students indicated satisfaction with treatment from their counselors must be appraised with due regard for the finding that nearly 30 percent indicated dissatisfaction with counselor treatment.

In the area of student attitudes toward school, one encouraging finding was that, in 1985, nearly two-thirds of the student respondents rated school spirit as good or excellent. Two other positive findings in this area were that, in 1985, twice as many students reported satisfaction than reported dissatisfaction with the school generally and with the quality of school activities available to students.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

MUMFORD HIGH SCHOOL

Dr. Mike Syropoulos

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Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

Introduction

One of the major goals of the HSIP was to improve school climate at each participating school. This report presents findings of an evaluation study of school climate at Mumford High School. The study is based on results of instructional and non-instructional staff surveys administered in the 1983-84 school year and again in 1984-85 (the final year of the project), and on results of student surveys administered in the same years.

PART I. Report on the Results of Staff Surveys on School Climate of Mumford High School

A part of the evaluation design of the High School Improvement Project (HSIP) at Mumford High School provided for school climate surveys of attitudes and opinions of instructional and non-instructional staff members. The results of these surveys are based on the responses of one hundred-seventeen (117) staff members in 1983-84, and seventy-three (73) staff members in the 1984-85 school year.

The School Climate Survey instrument consists of fifty (50) statements with four response choices, "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree" per statement. For purposes of analysis and discussion the fifty (50) statements were sorted topically into four school-climate categories. These are: physical facilities, interaction, curriculum practices, and teacher/principal relationships.

The four school climate factors stated above seem to create the milieu or environment within which learning takes place. Although they can have a significant impact on student achievement, as a set they are not as powerful as the instructional factors. Alone, the school climate factors are not sufficient to promote student achievement.

Physical Facilities

The decor of the effective schools is warm and pleasant; classroom arrangements are flexible; the school, inside and outside, is free of litter and graffiti; the halls and lavatories are in good condition.

The physical outlook of the school should be neat, clean and pleasant.

Interaction

Certain qualities in the relationships between staff and students are found in effective schools.

First, a sense of community among staff exists. Teachers feel respectful and friendly towards one another, take personal interest in each other and deal with their concerns openly.

Interaction (Cont'd)

Second, a sense of community and cohesion also exists among students.

Third, cohesion and support exist among students and staff.

Fourth, cohesion and support exist among instructional, non-instructional staff and parents.

Curriculum Practices

Some effective schools provide many opportunities for their students to be involved in meaningful activities in the school-opportunities to participate, to govern, to serve. More importantly, effective schools involve a large proportion of their students in these activities. Student participation includes procedures that encourage and reinforce involvement and provide students with the opportunities to learn the skills that make their involvement a successful experience.

Effective schools do a better job of rewarding students for good behavior and excellent work than does the typical school. Awards, citations, and honors are available to all students.

In effective schools affective education is an integral part of the curriculum; students progress is measured in accordance with abilities; and students work in a variety of organizational patterns.

Teacher/Principal Relationships

Certain qualities in the relationships between staff and principal are found in effective schools.

In effective schools, cohesion and support exist between staff and the principal. The principal is concerned with his staff's welfare and he is always helpful and supportive.

The principal in effective schools is likely to be a strong instructional leader, highly knowledgeable about instruction and curriculum. He is always open-minded to help his staff.

Staff Survey Results

The data displayed below indicate the mean of the percents responding positively to the statements in each school climate descriptor category. Those who didn't answer were excluded from the computation.

MEANS OF PERCENTS OF STAFF MEMBERS RESPONDING
POSITIVELY PER SCHOOL CLIMATE DESCRIPTOR CATEGORY

1983-85

	School Climate Descriptor Category	Number of Statements	Number of Respondents 1983-84	1984-85	Means of the Percent Respond. Positively 1983-84	1984-85	Difference
1.	Physical Facilities	17	117	263	46%	49%	+ 3%
2.	Interaction	13	112	275	70	75	+ 5
3.	Curriculum Practices	10	107	281	69	70	+ 1
4.	Teacher/Principal Relationships	10	111	268	65	62	- 3

Conclusion

The data indicate that there has been a very slight improvement in three school climate descriptors: physical facilities, interaction and curruculum practices. The fourth descriptor, teacher/principal relationships, was lower than the previous year. In the 1984-85 survey, in three school climate categories (interaction, curriculum practices, and teacher/principal relationships) in a range of 62 to 75 percent the staff responded positively. An average of less than one half of the staff members responded positively to physical facilities.

PART II. Report on the Results of Surveys on School Climate of Mumford High School Students

A part of the evaluation design of the High School Improvement Project (HSIP) at Mumford High School provided for school climate surveys of student attitudes and opinions across all four grades. The results of these surveys are based on the responses of 482 students in the 1983-84 school year, and 284 students in the 1984-85 school year.

Student respondents were members of randomly selected social studies classes. The number of classes selected per grade was proportionately approximate to each grade's enrollment percent.

The School Climate Survey instrument consists of 28 statements with four response choices, "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree" per statement. For purposes of analysis and discussion the 28 statements were sorted topically into eight school-climate descriptor categories. These are: respect, trust, high morale, opportunity for input, continuous academic and social growth, cohesiveness, school renewal, and caring. These school climate descriptor categories are very important elements affecting achievement in a school.

We know that the climate of a school or of a classroom can have a profound effect on the level of productivity and satisfaction of the staff and students.

School climate may be defined as qualities of the school, and the people in the school, which affect how people feel while they are there.

Schools with positive climates are places where people care, respect, and trust one another; and where the school as an institution cares, respects and trusts people. In such schools people feel a high sense of pride and ownership which comes from each individual's having a role in making the school a better place.

Schools with positive climates are constantly changing as people reshape them in accordance with human needs. In such schools, school improvement is everybody's business.

Schools with positive climates are cohesive places. People know what their schools stand for. In such schools the social groups (cliques) communicate with one another, respect one another and work with one another for school improvement.

Schools with positive climates are characterized by humanistic belief and value systems, procedures, rules, regulations, and policies. Conversely, schools with negative climates are characterized as being institution-centered rather than people centered.

We have now had enough experience with climate improvement to suspect that nothing improves until the school's climate does. How people feel about their school can either facilitate or sabotage change. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IS FUELED BY PEOPLE'S EMOTIONS.

Student Survey Results

The data displayed below indicate the mean of the percents responding positively to the statements in each school climate descriptor category. Those who didn't answer were excluded in the computation.

MEANS OF PERCENTS OF STUDENTS RESPONDING POSITIVELY
PER SCHOOL CLIMATE DESCRIPTOR CATEGORY

1983-85

School Climate Descriptor Category	Number of Statements	Number of Respondents 1983-84	1984-85	Means of the Percent Respond. Positively 1983-84	1984-85	Difference
Respect	3	440	283	52%	61%	+ 9%
Trust	4	421	284	39	44	+ 5
High Morale	3	415	280	28	32	+ 4
Opp. to Learn	4	442	266	37	49	+12
Cont. Academic & School Growth	2	435	254	40	50	+10
Cohesiveness	4	465	264	41	50	+ 9
School Renewal	4	471	249	43	58	+15
Caring	4	482	261	50	60	+10

Conclusion

The data indicate that six categories showed an increase of 9% or more in positive response. The other two categories showed slight improvement.

In the 1984-85 survey, of the eight school climate descriptor categories Respect, Caring and School Renewal were most positively assessed by the students surveyed at Mumford High School. An average of sixty percent (60%) of the students responded positively. High Morale received the least positive assessment. Less than half of the students responded positively, on the average, to the High Morale, Opportunity to Learn, and Trust items. Half of the students responded positively to Continuous Academic School Growth, and Cohesiveness.

The evaluator strongly believes that the school climate will continue to improve if the project continues in the schools with some modifications. It is imperative that the administration, staff, and students work cooperatively for the success of an effective school.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

PERSHING HIGH SCHOOL

Carolyn Brown

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

PERSHING SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION

Introduction

The Detroit Public Schools' High School Improvement Project leadership decided that school climate was among its top priorities.

At Pershing High School, the administration, faculty, support staff and students focused on three major areas for improvement: (1) student achievement, (2) curriculum review and school improvement, and (3) school climate. Major features of school climate improvement strategies included physical plant, safety, student code, and school security plan.

Physical Plant

In their commitment to achieve a stable school climate, Pershing high school staff indicated the need for some beautification activities. Efforts were made to improve the general appearance and add ambience with a variety of activities.

Safety

The administration, faculty, parents and students were concerned about safety at Pershing. Due to frequent accidents, preventive measures were implemented in order to reduce them. Being safety conscious became an important part of the Pershing High School climate improvement program.

Student Code

The High School Improvement Project team indicated that undesirable incidents would drop if promises for enforcing the Uniform Student Code of Conduct were implemented. The enforcement of the Uniform Student Code of Conduct is one of the strategies Pershing uses to reduce undesirable incidents.

School Security Plan

School security has been a concern throughout the nation. At Pershing, an

emergency security plan was implemented and strategies were implemented to make all students familiar with the Emergency Security Plan.

Student Opinion Inventory Results

The Student Opinion Inventory survey instrument has 34 questions with five response choices per question. For purpose of analysis and discussion, the climate elements (26 questions) were taken from the following categories: (1) STUDENT-PARTICIPATION, (2) STUDENT-TEACHER, (3) STUDENT-COUNSELOR, (4) STUDENT-ADMINISTRATION, (5) STUDENT-CURRICULUM and INSTRUCTION, (6) STUDENT-SCHOOL IMAGE.

The Student Opinion Inventory was designed to assess student attitudes toward many facets of the school.

At Pershing High School, the Student Opinion Inventory was administered to a sample of 452 ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade students during the month of May, 1985.

The 26 climate element questions were selected because they measure students' perceptions of climate at Pershing. Table 1 provides means in percents of student respondents during 1985. The percentage data are based on the two highest levels of attainment responses for each question in each of the six descriptor categories. A sample of highest level responses on the Student Opinion Inventory includes: Very Favorable-Favorable, All-Many, All-Most, and Always-Usually.

A brief description of the six categories follows:

Student-Teacher

This subscale measures how students perceive their teacher's behavior.

Student-Counselor

This subscale measures helpfulness of the counselors to the students.

TABLE 1
MEAN OF THE PERCENTS OF STUDENTS RESPONDING
FAVORABLY PER SCHOOL CLIMATE DESCRIPTOR
1984

Descriptor	Number of Questions	Number of Respondents	Means of the Percent Responding Favorably
STUDENT-PARTICIPATION	5	452	42
STUDENT-TEACHER	6	452	52
STUDENT-COUNSELOR	2	452	42
STUDENT-ADMINISTRATION	5	452	26
STUDENT-CURRICULUM and INSTRUCTION	1	452	57
STUDENT-SCHOOL IMAGE	6	452	44

Student-Administration

This subscale measures how students perceive their school administration's behavior.

Student-Curriculum and Instruction

This subscale measures the students' perceptions of the curriculum, teacher methods, learning and it's relevance to everyday living.

Student-Participation

This subscale measures the students' perceptions of their involvement in student activities.

Student-School Image

This subscale measures "school spirit" and student satisfaction with a variety of subjects, activities and quality of both.

The Pershing school climate evaluation data indicate that Pershing strengths are in STUDENT-CURRICULUM and INSTRUCTION with an average of 57 percent (57%) and STUDENT-TEACHER with an average of 52 percent (52%) favorable responses.

In the staff survey STUDENT-ADMINISTRATION received the least favorable response with an average of 26 percent (26%). The other three categories had assessments (ranging from 42 percent (42%) to 44 percent (44%).

Conclusion

The findings suggest that there is a need for improvement in all school climate categories with the weakest being in STUDENT-ADMINISTRATION, STUDENT-PARTICIPATION and STUDENT-COUNSELOR. The most favorable categories were STUDENT-CURRICULUM and INSTRUCTION and STUDENT-TEACHER.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

DENBY HIGH SCHOOL

Dr. Mike Syropoulos

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

Introduction

One of the major goals of the HSIP was to improve school climate at each participating school. This report presents findings of an evaluation study of school climate at Denby High School. The study is based on results of instructional and non-instructional staff surveys administered in the 1983-84 school year and again in 1984-85 (the final year of the project), and on results of student surveys administered in the same years.

PART I. Report on the Results of Staff Surveys on School Climate of Denby High School

A part of the evaluation design of the High School Improvement Project (HSIP) at Denby High School provided for school climate surveys of attitudes and opinions of instructional and non-instructional staff members. The results of these surveys are based on the responses of ninety-seven (97) staff members in 1983-84, and seventy-nine (79) staff members in the 1984-85 school year.

The School Climate Survey instrument consists of fifty (50) statements with four response choices, "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree" per statement. For purposes of analysis and discussion the fifty (50) statements were sorted topically into four school-climate categories., These are: physical facilities, interaction, curriculum practices, and teacher/principal relationships.

The four school climate factors stated above seem to create the milieu or environment within which learning takes place. Although they can have a significant impact on student achievement, as a set they are not as powerful as the instructional factors. Alone, the school climate factors are not sufficient to promote student achievement.

Physical Facilities

The decor of the effective schools is warm and pleasant; classroom arrangements are flexible; the school, inside and outside, is free of litter and graffiti; the halls and lavatories are in good condition.

The physical outlook of the school should be neat, clean and pleasant.

Interaction

Certain qualities in the relationships between staff and students are found in effective schools.

First, a sense of community among staff exists. Teachers feel respectful and friendly towards one another, take personal interest in each other and deal with their concerns openly.

Interaction (Cont'd)

Second, a sense of community and cohesion also exists among students.

Third, cohesion and support exist among students and staff.

Fourth, cohesion and support exist among instructional, non-instructional staff and parents.

Curriculum Practices

Some effective schools provide many opportunities for their students to be involved in meaningful activities in the school-opportunities to participate, to govern, to serve. More importantly, effective schools involve a large proportion of their students in these activities. Student participation includes procedures that encourage and reinforce involvement and provide students with the opportunities to learn the skills that make their involvement a successful experience.

Effective schools do a better job of rewarding students for good behavior and excellent work than does the typical school. Awards, citations, and honors are available to all students.

In effective schools affective education is an integral part of the curriculum; students progress is measured in accordance with abilities; and students work in a variety of organizational patterns.

Teacher/Principal Relationships

Certain qualities in the relationships between staff and principal are found in effective schools.

In effective schools, cohesion and support exist between staff and the principal. The principal is concerned with his staff's welfare and he is always helpful and supportive.

The principal in effective schools is likely to be a strong instructional leader, highly knowledgeable about instruction and curriculum. He is always open-minded to help his staff.

Staff Survey Results

The data displayed below indicate the mean of the percents responding positively to the statements in each school climate descriptor category. Those who didn't answer were excluded from the computation.

MEANS OF PERCENTS OF STAFF MEMBERS RESPONDING
POSITIVELY PER SCHOOL CLIMATE DESCRIPTOR CATEGORY

1983-85

	School Climate Descriptor Category	Number of Statements	Number of Respondents 1983-84	1984-85	Means of the Percent Respond. Positively 1983-84	1984-85	Difference
1.	Physical Facilities	17	95	74	41%	49%	+ 8%
2.	Interaction	13	97	75	61	65	+ 4
3.	Curriculum/Practices	10	96	79	65	65	0
4.	Teacher/Principal Relationships	10	95	77	53	63	+10

Conclusion

The data indicate that there has been a slight improvement in three school climate descriptors: physical facilities, interaction and teacher/principal relationships. The fourth descriptor, curriculum practices, didn't change at all. In the 1984-85 survey, in three school climate categories (interaction, curriculum practices, and teacher/principal relationships) about two-thirds of the staff responded positively. An average of slightly less than one half of the staff members responded positively to physical facilities.

PART II. Report on the Results of Surveys on School Climate of Denby High School Students

A part of the evaluation design of the High School Improvement Project (HSIP) at Denby High School provided for school climate surveys of student attitudes and opinions across all four grades. The results of these surveys are based on the responses of 428 students in the 1983-84 school year, and 289 students in the 1984-85 school year.

Student respondents were members of randomly selected social studies classes. The number of classes selected per grade was proportionately approximate to each grade's enrollment percent.

The School Climate Survey instrument consists of 28 questions with four response choices, "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree" per statement. For purposes of analysis and discussion the 28 questions were sorted topically into eight school-climate descriptive categories. These are: respect, trust, high morale, opportunity for input, continuous academic and social growth, cohesiveness, school renewal, and caring. These school climate descriptor categories are very important elements affecting achievement in a school.

We know that the climate of a school or of a classroom can have a profound effect on the level of productivity and satisfaction of the staff and students.

School climate may be defined as qualities of the school, and the people in the school, which affect how people feel while they are there.

Schools with positive climates are places where people care, respect, and trust one another; and where the school as an institution cares, respects and trusts people. In such schools people feel a high sense of pride and ownership which comes from each individual's having a role in making the school a better place.

Schools with positive climates are constantly changing as people reshape them in accordance with human needs. In such schools, school improvement is everybody's business.

Schools with positive climates are cohesive places. People know what their schools stand for. In such schools social groups (cliques) communicate with one another, respect one another and work with one another for school improvement.

Schools with positive climates are characterized by humanistic belief and value systems, procedures, rules, regulations, and policies. Conversely, schools with negative climates are characterized as being institution-centered rather than people centered.

We have now had enough experience with climate improvement to suspect that nothing improves until the school's climate does. How people feel about their school can either facilitate or sabotage change. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IS FUELED BY PEOPLE'S EMOTIONS.

Student Survey Results

The data displayed below indicate the mean of the percents responding positively to the statements in each school climate descriptor category. Those who didn't answer were excluded in the computation.

MEANS OF PERCENTS OF STUDENTS RESPONDING POSITIVELY
PER SCHOOL CLIMATE DESCRIPTOR CATEGORY

1983-85

School Climate Descriptor Category	Number of Statements	Number of Respondents 1983-84	1984-85	Means of the Percent Respond. Positively 1983-84	1984-85	Difference
Respect	3	423	277	60%	67%	+ 7%
Trust	4	421	278	47	47	0
High Morale	3	418	282	34	35	+ 1
Opp. to Learn	4	401	268	52	57	+ 5
Cont. Academic & School Growth	2	386	273	52	55	+ 3
Cohesiveness	4	410	280	57	58	+ 1
School Renewal	4	390	258	57	60	+ 3
Caring	4	412	283	51	63	+12

Conclusion

The data indicate that there has been a slight improvement in six of the school climate descriptor categories. One descriptor didn't change at all, and the other category showed a 12 percent increase over the previous year.

In the 1984-85 survey the Caring and Respect categories were assessed slightly more positively than any of the others. All categories except Trust and High Morale were assessed positively by majorities of students (ranging from 55 percent to 67 percent). The High Morale category received the least positive assessment.

The evaluator strongly believes that the school climate will continue to improve if the project continues in the schools with some modifications. It is imperative that the administration, staff, and students work cooperatively for the success of an effective school.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

SOUTHEASTERN HIGH SCHOOL

Charles A. Green

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

SOUTHEASTERN HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL CLIMATE EVALUATION REPORT

Introduction

The following assessment of school climate at Southeastern High School is based on results of staff and student surveys conducted during the four years of school participation in the High School Improvement Project (HSIP). The School Effectiveness Questionnaire (adapted from the Connecticut School Effectiveness Questionnaire) was administered to all instructional staff members in the spring of 1983, 1984, and 1985.

The Student Opinion Inventory (published by the National Study of School Evaluation) was administered to samples of Southeastern students in the spring of 1984 and 1985.

The school climate factors addressed for study in the staff questionnaire are:

A. Safe and Orderly Environment

There is an orderly, purposeful atmosphere which is free from the threat of physical harm. However, the atmosphere is not oppressive and is conducive to teaching and learning.

B. Instructional Leadership

The principal or department head acts as the instructional leader who effectively communicates the mission of the school to the staff, parents and students, and who understands and applies the characteristics of instructional effectiveness in the management of the instructional program of the school.

C. High Expectations

The school displays a climate of expectations in which the staff believes and demonstrates that students can attain mastery of basic skills and that they (the staff) have the capability to help students achieve such mastery.

D. Home-School Relations

Parents understand and support the basic mission of the school and are made to feel that they have an important role in achieving this mission.

In addition, selected items from the Instruction, Curriculum, School Morale, and School Administration sections of the Student Opinion Inventory provided the basis for the assessment of school climate at Southeastern High School.

Staff Questionnaire Results

Safe and Orderly Environment

1. The school is a safe and secure place to work.

In 1983, 27 percent of the staff Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, five percent were Undecided, and 68 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagree.

In 1985, 51 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, 13 percent were Undecided, and 37 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 24 percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that the school is a safe and secure place to work.

2. Most students in this school are enthusiastic about learning.

In 1983, 30 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, five percent were Undecided, and 65 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed with this statement.

In 1985, 40 percent agreed or Strongly Agreed, 10 percent were Undecided, and 49 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 10 percent increase in staff who Agreed or

Strongly Agreed that most students at Southeastern are enthusiastic about learning.

3. The physical condition of this school building is generally unpleasant and unkempt.

In 1983, 42 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, seven percent were Undecided, and 51 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 10 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, four percent were Undecided, and 85 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 34 percent increase in staff who Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed that the physical condition of the school is generally unpleasant and unkempt.

4. Students in this school abide by school rules.

In 1983, 20 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, three percent were Undecided, and 47 percent Disagreed to Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 47 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, six percent were Undecided, and 47 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 27 percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that students in this school abide by school rules.

5. Generally, discipline is not an issue in this school.

In 1983, 23 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, three percent were Undecided, and 74 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 28 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, six percent were Undecided, and 66 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate an eight percent decrease in staff who Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed that, generally, discipline is not an issue in this school.

6. The school building is neat, bright, clean and comfortable.

In 1983, 27 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, five percent were Undecided, and 68 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 78 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, seven percent were Undecided, and 15 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 51 percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that the school building is neat, bright, clean and comfortable.

7. Staff and students do not view security as an issue in this school.

In 1983, 10 percent of the staff Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, two percent were Undecided, and 88 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 17 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, nine percent were Undecided, and 74 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 14 percent decrease in staff who Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed that staff and students do not view security as an issue in this school.

8. A positive feeling permeates the school.

In 1983, 16 percent of the staff Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, eight percent were Undecided, and 76 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 38 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, 12 percent were Undecided, and 50 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 22 percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that a positive feeling permeates the school.

9. Class atmosphere in this school is, generally, very conducive to learning for all students.

In 1983, 45 percent of the staff Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, seven percent were Undecided, and 48 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 56 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, nine percent were Undecided, and 35 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate an 11 percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that classroom atmosphere is, generally, conducive to learning for all students.

Instructional Leadership

1. Most problems facing this school can be solved by the principal and faculty without a great deal of outside help.

In 1983, 48 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, five percent were Undecided, and 47 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 74 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, nine percent were Undecided, and 16 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 26 percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that most problems can be solved by the principal and staff.

2. The principal is highly visible throughout the school.

In 1983, 73 percent of the staff Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, eight percent were Undecided, and 19 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 83 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, 10 percent were Undecided, and 13 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 10 percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that the principal is highly visible throughout the school.

3. Discussions with my department head often result in improved instructional practices.

In 1983, 40 percent of the staff Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, five percent were Undecided, and 55 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 58 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, 19 percent were Undecided, and 23 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate an 18 percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that discussions with the department head often result in improved instructional practices.

4. The principal is accessible to discuss matters dealing with instruction.

In 1983, 26 percent of the staff Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, 10 percent were Undecided, and 64 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 58 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, 10 percent were Undecided, and 32 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 22 percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that the principal is accessible to discuss matters dealing with instruction.

5. The principal rarely makes informal contacts with students and teachers around the school.

In 1983, 11 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, three percent were Undecided, and 86 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 12 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, six percent were Undecided, and 82 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a four percent reduction in staff who Disagreed

or Strongly Disagreed that the principal rarely makes informal contacts with students and teachers around the school.

6. There is clear, strong centralized instructional leadership from the principal in this school.

In 1983, 19 percent of the staff Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, five percent were Undecided, and 66 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 42 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, nine percent were Undecided, and 49 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 23 percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that there is clear, strong centralized instructional leadership from the principal in this school.

High Expectations

1. In this school, low-achieving students present more discipline problems than other students.

In 1983, 75 percent of the staff Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, three percent were Undecided, and 22 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 30 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, six percent were Undecided, and 64 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 45 percent reduction in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that low-achieving students present more discipline problems than other students.

2. Teachers in this school believe they are responsible for all students mastering all basic skills at each grade level.

In 1983, 48 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement,

12 percent were Undecided, and 40 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 51 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, 20 percent were Undecided, and 29 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a three percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that teachers in this school believe they are responsible for all students mastering all basic skills at each grade level.

3. Parent-teacher conferences result in specific plans for home/school cooperation aimed at improving student classroom achievement.

In 1983, 41 percent of the staff Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, nine percent were Uncertain, and 50 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 58 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, 15 percent were Undecided, and 28 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 17 percent increase in staff who Agreed or Strongly Agreed that parent-teacher conferences result in specific plans for home/school cooperation aimed at improving student classroom achievement.

Home-School Relations

1. There is an active parent-school group in this school that involves many parents.

In 1983, 19 percent of the staff Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the above statement, five percent were Undecided, and 76 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

In 1985, 22 percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed, 19 percent were Undecided, and 59 percent Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed.

The 1985 data indicate a 17 percent reduction in staff who Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed that there is an active parent-school group in this school that involves many parents.

Summary of Staff Questionnaire Results

Safe and Orderly Environment

Positive attitudes of the staff toward the school as a safe and secure place to work have increased significantly over the years.

The physical condition of the school is perceived to be in better shape than in previous years.

There was a slight increase of staff members in 1985 who agreed that students in this school abide by school rules.

Also noted is a 22 percent increase in staff who agreed that a positive feeling permeates the school.

However, discipline and security, as perceived by staff, continues to be an issue at Southeastern High School.

Instructional Leadership

There is evidence of a substantial increase in staff confidence in their ability to solve school problems.

The principal of Southeastern is presently viewed in a positive light by most of the staff.

The majority of the staff in 1983 and 1985 agreed that the principal is highly visible throughout the school.

The majority of the staff in 1983 and 1985 disagreed that the principal rarely makes informal contacts with students and teachers around the school.

In 1985, 59 percent of the staff agreed that the principal is accessible to discuss matters dealing with instruction, a 23 percent increase over 1983.

There was also a 23 percent increase in staff who agreed that there is a clear, centralized instructional leadership from the principal in the school.

High Expectations

In 1985, 30 percent of the staff agreed that low-achieving students present more discipline problems than other students, a 45 percent decrease from 1983.

A slight majority of the staff agreed that teachers in this school believe they are responsible for all students mastering all basic skills at each grade level.

Home-School Relations

The majority of the staff perceive parents as not being actively involved in the school.

In 1985, 58 percent of the staff agreed that parent-teacher conferences result in specific plans for home/school cooperation aimed at improving student classroom achievement, a 17 percent increase over 1983.

Selected Items From the Student Opinion Inventory Results

Instruction

6. How many of your teachers seem to care if you learn the subject they teach?

In 1984, 63 percent of the sample respondents (9th, 10th, 11th grade students) reported Most or All to the above question. Fifteen percent reported About Half and 22 percent reported Few or None.

In 1985, 65 percent of the sample respondents (9th, 10th, 11th grade students) reported Most or All, 13 percent reported About Half, and 22 percent reported Few or None.

A comparison of the 1984 and 1985 data show that in 1985 there was a two percent increase in student respondents who reported Most or All and

no change in the percent of students who reported Few or None.

12. How many of your teachers give you enough personal encouragement in your school work?

In 1984, 36 percent of the respondents reported Most or All to the above question. Twenty-seven percent reported About Half and 37 percent reported Few or None.

In 1985, 45 percent reported Most or All, 13 percent reported About Half, and 42 percent reported Few or None.

A comparison of the 1984 and 1985 data show that in 1985 there was a nine percent increase in the percent of students who reported Most or All. However, there was also a five percent increase in students who reported Few or None.

School Morale

4. How often do you feel that you "belong" in your school?

In 1984, 68 percent of the respondents reported Usually or Always to the above question. Sixteen percent reported Half the Time and 16 percent reported Seldom or Never.

In 1985, 65 percent reported Usually or Always, 15 percent reported Half the Time, and 20 percent reported Seldom or Never.

A comparison of the 1984 and 1985 data show a slight decrease of three percent in the Usually or Always category in 1985, and a four percent increase in the Seldom or Never category.

29. In general, how proud or ashamed of your school are you?

In 1984, 58 percent of the respondents reported Proud or Very Proud to the above question. Thirty-two percent reported Neither Proud nor Ashamed and 10 percent reported Ashamed or Very Ashamed.

In 1985, 51 percent reported Proud or Very Proud, 35 percent reported Neither Proud nor Ashamed, and 13 percent reported Ashamed or Very Ashamed.

A comparison of the 1984 and 1985 data show that in 1985 there was a seven percent decrease in respondents who reported Proud or Very Proud and a three percent increase in the Ashamed or Very ashamed categories.

31. In general, are you satisfied with your school?

In 1984, 62 percent of the student respondents reported being Satisfied or Very Satisfied with their school. Twenty-eight percent reported being Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied and 10 percent reported being Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied.

In 1985, 55 percent of the respondents reported being Satisfied or Very Satisfied, 28 percent reported being Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied, and 17 percent reported being Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied.

A comparison of the 1984 and 1985 data show that in 1985 there was a seven percent decrease in respondents who reported being Satisfied or Very Satisfied and a seven percent increase in the Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied categories.

School Administration

19. In general, are you satisfied with the way you are treated by the administration?

In 1984, 44 percent reported that they were Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the way they were treated by the administration. Forty-three percent were Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied and 13 percent were Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied.

In 1985, 43 percent of the respondents reported that they were Satisfied or Very Satisfied, 38 percent reported being Neither Satisfied nor

Dissatisfied, and 19 percent reported being Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied.

A comparison of the 1984 and 1985 data show that in 1985 there was a one percent decrease in respondents who reported being Satisfied or Very Satisfied and a six percent increase in the Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied categories.

Summary of Student Questionnaire Results

Instruction

In 1984 and 1985, six out of ten respondents reported that Most or All of the teachers seem to care if you learn the subject they teach.

A comparison of the 1984 and 1985 data show that in 1985 there was a nine percent increase in the percent of students who reported Most or All of their teachers give enough personal encouragement in their school work.

School Morale

In 1984 and 1985, more than 60 percent of the students responded Usually or Always to the question, "How often do you feel that you 'belong' in your school?"

The majority of the students in 1984 and 1985 reported that they were Proud or Very Proud of their school, however, in 1985, there was a seven percent decrease from the previous year.

The majority of students in 1984 and 1985 reported satisfaction with their school, but in 1985 seven percent less students reported satisfaction.

School Administration

In 1984 and 1985, only four of ten students were satisfied with the way they were treated by the administration.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

NORTHERN HIGH SCHOOL

Arnold Fisher

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

NORTHERN HIGH SCHOOL PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT
High School Improvement Project

The Detroit Public Schools High School Improvement Project (HSIP) was first initiated at Northern and seven other high schools in the 1981-82 school year. As a first organizing step, a flyer and a memo were sent to each staff member at Northern inviting a written response. There was little initial reaction. The principal then individually approached each staff member soliciting volunteers from representative subject areas. Twenty-five teachers were then formed into six subcommittees (English, Counseling and Guidance, Mathematics, Co-curricular, Science and Fine Arts).

The first year these committees met bi-weekly. The second year, the principal mandated that all members of the staff would make up the HSIP Committee and meet each month with one of the six subcommittees (the subcommittees then met once each month in the interim) and report to the entire staff. The third year, department heads were asked to chair each subcommittee. The appointment of a new principal from a non-project school the fourth year contributed to a lessening of committee functioning.

The first year committee meetings took place with lunch provided to members and the majority of the school staff envied the lunches but perceived little movement or action. The committee members themselves felt, however, that they were enthused, motivated and committed as they went through course outlines, curricular guides, test scores, and printed school history. They felt they had fully examined and assessed the school on paper and they planned to begin implementation the following year.

The second year, as indicated, the entire staff was involved. Each department examined and amended the proposed plans of action. Staff interviews held later indicated that this project year was perceived as the best,

with high aspirations, possibilities for change, staff involvement, and concern.

The third year, the principal appointed the department heads as subcommittee heads. The principal also had begun to take on national responsibilities and the department heads, to fill the void, began to develop their own separate plans of action. The fourth year began with a change in administration that the staff felt precluded implementation of these plans. A new principal was appointed and a 'let's wait and see what develops' mentality was pervasive.

The following information, obtained through the analysis of a process evaluation survey presented to the staff during each of the project years, and supplemented by a series of individual focus interviews with the separate subcommittees regarding their views of the project over the four year period, is presented below. The process evaluation was focused to provide information on the three following questions:

1. What worked well?
2. What impeded the project?
3. How could the project be improved?

What worked well?

The use of the committee and subcommittee system that evolved during the first two years worked well in the sense that the process made use of staff and student feedback and adapted to prevail over the envy and cynicism that arose or was endemic in the process. The mandatory appointment of department heads as committee chairpersons began well. Previous to this time there was no effective way of translating committee ideas into action since leadership was the responsibility of staff without authority to implement. However,

this process was impeded by confusion in overall direction resulting from the school principal's burgeoning national responsibilities and the inability of others to replace his authority.

The use of the facilitator as an activities director, under the aegis of the co-curricular subcommittee, involved the students and student government to a degree unknown in the recent history of the school. Student representatives produced a charter, and took on responsibilities both for planning and implementation. These activities received a Ford Recognition Grant in 1983.

During the middle two years, staff (including department heads) were: (1) sent to the Management Academy, and (2) received telecommunication inservice training in effective teaching. Other staff members volunteered to observe these newly trained teachers, and the effects of this training in classroom management and time-on-task were disseminated throughout the school staff. Staff interviews held in May, 1985, were explicit in commending this process. Central support was seen as strong throughout the four project years.

What impeded the project?

The third year of the project, when everything seemed to be coming together, was adversely affected by the absences of the principal because of his other roles as an educator on the national level. The facilitator, with no administrative standing, described himself as caught in a bind between the administrative bargaining unit (OSAS) and the teacher bargaining unit (DFT) and was unable to fill the leadership void. (The DFT union representative told the facilitator that he was doing administrative work and could not

receive DFT support.) According to staff interviews, the facilitator continued to receive peer support. He was seen by the staff as "caught in the middle."

The change of principal the fourth year did not alleviate problems because the new administrator brought to the school an established philosophy and style which had been highly successful in the past and he had no prior opportunity to buy into or develop a commitment to the High School Improvement Project.

Constant transfer of the community agent responsibilities resulted in a continuous change in parent membership and commitment to the project. Therefore, parental input never fully achieved desired levels.

The involvement of the Wayne County Intermediate School District was limited to "experts" making presentations. Virtually the same discourse was presented each of the three times the county representative was changed. Commitments were left unfulfilled as a result of these changes. There was little evaluation or feedback during the first two project years and little perceived desire for such information by the fourth year.

Poor communication during project years three and four resulted in many cancelled and postponed meetings and promoted confusion and apathy. Poorly announced and cancelled meetings were a common frustration for the school and project staff including this evaluator.

<u>How could the project be improved</u>?

1. Commitment of staff to a project of this kind should also be accompanied by commitments to keep people on the job for project duration. This would include support staff from state and county, as well.

2. The role of the facilitator should be written to include bargaining agent support. As it was, the facilitator could not attend cabinet meetings for the first three of the four years.

3. Subcommittee meetings should be held at different times to allow the facilitator to communicate internally amongst these groups.

4. Budget responsibilities were not clearly defined. Either the facilitator or the principal should have had complete responsibility. The bookkeeper claimed she never knew what movies were available or what encumbrances prevailed. Promises were made that could not be kept.

AF/fc

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

NORTHWESTERN HIGH SCHOOL

Denny Stavros, Ph.D.

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Northwestern High School
1981 - 1985

The purpose of this report is to briefly summarize the observations of members of the project planning team relative to the team's operation. The observations were collected from questionnaire responses made at the end of each program year and interviews completed at the termination of the project.

Following an introductory section that presents observations on the composition of the planning team, three separate sections treat three specific process questions, respectively:

A. What worked well?

B. What impeded progress?

C. What changes could improve the project's operation?

Denny Stavros, Ph.D.
Evaluation and Testing Department
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August 13, 1985

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Northwestern High School
1981 - 1985

Composition of the Planning Team

Perceptions of planning team members over the course of four years were that the planning team, per se, was well balanced in age, years of experience, subject area representation and school seniority, but poorly balanced by gender and race. The observation by some members that the typical planning team member was a black female was, indeed, accurate. Parent involvement was limited to one member, who was also employed as part of the office staff, for well over half of the project's four years; student participation of a limited sort did not last beyond the first year.

Some planning team members felt that subject area representation fell short of being full or complete and that there should have been greater depth per department. There was, however, articulation of various viewpoints from the different disciplines represented. More often than not, the problems identified by these latter were essentially the same. Team members soon realized they were striving for the same goals and that they also shared similar problems. This helped reinforce and sustain members' interest, enthusiasm and motivation. Additionally, that the planning team members were self-selected, the term used by one member, contributed to a collection of persons with positive attitudes for the life of the project. Another member suggested that the planning team represented a group of self-starters whose presence on the planning team could not have been assured had the team members been chosen randomly.

However, many felt the effectiveness of the planning team could have improved if the administration had been active in team meetings by direct participation, if not as members. This did not include the principal who managed to attend, or at least make an appearance at, almost all meetings. Some also felt that some staff opinion leaders were not members of the planning team, and that certain key persons, who represented power, were also missing.

What Worked Well?

On the basis of end-of-project interviews with planning team members and four waves of questionnaire responses of planning team members, the following were singled out as contributing to the success achieved by the planning team:

1. Continuity. Most, if not all, key planning team members continued functioning in their roles throughout the four years.
2. Planning team's organization: structure and function. Subcommittees were created and much of the planning team's work was delegated to the various subcommittees. A written agenda was prepared for each planning team meeting as well as a detailed report of the previous meeting. This latter insured the continuity of effort, assignment of responsibility and accountability, all of which characterized the planning team's operation. While written subcommittee reports were often prepared for presentation, either written or oral reports of subcommittee activities were regularly presented to the planning team. Planning team meetings were held at least once a month during the first year, but less frequently by the end of the project's tenure.

3. Sustained leadership of the project facilitator. The project facilitator was largely responsible for the planning team's operation. He shared team leadership with the region administrator until the latter's retirement, where upon the facilitator assumed the full responsibility for the team's actual leadership for the duration of the project.

4. Composition of the planning team. As noted above, the team was composed of hard working, dedicated staff persons who worked well together and remained active on the planning team for the project's duration.

5. Implementation of changes within the project's first year. A number of changes were effected that demonstrated to the planning team as well as the school's staff that school problems could be solved.

6. Participation and support of the school's principal in the activities of the planning team. There was more noticeable participation by the principal at the early stages of the project, yet, throughout the four years, she supported both the team's activities and its members. Also, since the project was inaugurated during the principal's first year in office, there was apparently no feeling on her behalf of vested interest in school policies that were challenged by the planning team. This, of course, was not the case with the administrative group as a whole.

7. Planning team's methods for identifying school problems. The initial meetings of the planning team were given over to creating a list of school problems. Suggestions from the entire school staff were included. The list was sorted into groupings and these were ordered according to perceived difficulty of solvability. The creation of standing subcommittees followed the initial needs assessment procedure.

8. The meetings held by the project director with school administrators, i.e., principals and department heads. These meetings focused on the implementation of specific changes, but indirectly, they worked at breaking down reluctance and/or resistance to change.

What Impeded Progress?

From the same sources, the following were cited as impediments to progress:

1. School administration was unwilling to give the support the planning team felt it should have received. While some proposed policy changes were readily accepted, on others, the administration would not budge. In yet other instances, changes were short-lived and, in still others, changes once made were drastically altered. The change process was negotiations with the administration and not implementation. In theory, the principal was head of the planning team.
2. The project was never fully integrated within the school's institutional structure. The project was viewed as a separate entity, a "downtown activity." The lack of support from the administration, in the eyes of some, prevented easy acceptance by the staff and, without regular reports to the staff on project progress, the changes brought about through the efforts of the planning team were never fully known by the staff.
3. Insufficient time to accomplish the work of the planning team. This was true for the project facilitator whose position was not full time as well as for the planning team members. There were too few meetings of the planning team during the last two years of the project's operation. Meeting times often conflicted with class assignments for some members and would-be members.

What Changes Could Improve the Project's Operation?

The following are suggested changes that should improve the project process, again from the same sources:

1. The project and its component parts, e.g., the planning team, should be institutionalized. It should function as a regular school unit whose purpose would be to facilitate the implementation of changes directed toward school improvement.
2. The position of project facilitator should be made full time with the provision for a full time secretary. The project facilitator should participate, with full membership, on the administration cabinet, issue written reports, and report periodically to the entire staff at school-wide staff meetings.
3. The planning team should be restructured. The composition of the team should be altered to reflect a balanced departmental representation and one based on race and sex. Key school opinion leaders and administrative staff persons should be participating members.
4. The operations of the planning team should be made more efficient. Written reports should be issued by each subcommittee. Meeting times should be moved forward; a minimum of one meeting per month must be mandatory. Released time should be provided to do the work required by teacher members of the planning team. Contact should be maintained with support organizations, such as the local PTSA, and joint ventures be initiated, e.g., open-house.

5. The project's goals for the year should be determined and communicated to the staff at the beginning of the school year. A needs assessment inventory should be completed by each staff member to provide information on needs as well as accomplishments.

DS/fc
August 13, 1985

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

MACKENZIE HIGH SCHOOL

Carolyn Brown

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

MACKENZIE HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PROCESS EVALUATION

Introduction

The Detroit Public Schools' High School Improvement Project was initiated at Mackenzie High School in the 1981-82 school year. A school improvement committee of teachers, department heads and the school principal, was established to plan and coordinate project activities. The committee's work involved the following major steps:

(1) Problem identification, analysis and prioritization;
(2) Study of relevant research on effective schools and effective teaching;
(3) Selection of problem solution strategies;
(4) Development of a school improvement plan; and
(5) Implementation of the plan with continuous evaluation of progress toward goals.

This report presents findings of an evaluation of the process employed by Mackenzie's High School Improvement Project (HSIP) committee over the four years of operation of the project. The report is based on responses of the committee members to an "HSIP Process Evaluation Questionnaire" administered annually at the end of each year of the project's operation. Interviews of committee members and bi-monthly facilitator reports also served as sources of evidence for the evaluation.

Findings

A. WHAT WORKED WELL?

- Cooperation among committee members.
- Sharing ideas and problem solving in subcommittee meetings.
- Brainstorming for strategy solutions.
- Group discussions by committee members to solve identified problems.
- Utilization of test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupil achievement of basic skills.
- Utilization of research and literature on more effective schools.
- Surveys of staff and students to identify problems.
- Facilitator leadership was both supportive and positive.
- Principal leadership was both supportive and positive.

B. WHAT IMPEDED PROGRESS?

- Too few meetings
- Time constraints; more time was needed for project, activities and meetings.
- Receiving monies after approval was time consuming.
- Staff changes; their different coordinators and many committee members were active for either one or two years or less.
- Difficulty prioritizing focus areas.
- Coming to closure on ways to solve problems.
- Difficulty with problem solving implementations.

C. HOW COULD THE HSIP PROCESS HAVE BEEN IMPROVED?

The following suggestions were made by committee members:

- More total staff commitment
- More sharing among committee members.
- More sharing with other staff members that are not a part of th HSIP committee.
- Inviting parents and interested community members to be part of the HSIP team.
- Share HSIP accomplishments with community via newspaper/newsletter.
- Establishing a budget subcommittee
- Exploring ways to use and implement technology in the curriculum.
- Share more research on effective schools/teachers with committee.
- Including more students in all facets of the HSIP process.

The most important lessons that committee members felt were learned about what makes for an effective school improvement project were that the following are essential:

a. Total staff participation and cooperation in setting goals and objectives.

b. Total acceptance of school mission by the entire staff.

c. Commitment and cooperation from staff, students, parents and community as well.

d. Ongoing evaluation feedback.

e. Continuous update on more effective schools research.

f. Support from central staff.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

HENRY FORD HIGH SCHOOL

Paul T. Rankin

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT FOR
HENRY FORD HIGH SCHOOL

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Introduction

Henry Ford High School's participation in Detroit's High School Improvement Project (HSIP) began in December, 1981, with the establishment of an HSIP committee which included the principal, a few department heads, some counselors, and several teachers. Also included, as support members, were a curriculum specialist from the Region 4 Office, an evaluation specialist from the Evaluation and Testing Department, and a consultant from the Wayne County Intermediate School District. This committee was responsible for all HSIP activities at the school during the four school years from 1981-82 through 1984-85.

The project activities of the committee involved the following basic steps: (1) problem identification, analysis and prioritization; (2) study of relevant research on effective schools and effective teaching; (3) selection of problem solution strategies; (4) development of a school improvement plan; and (5) implementation of the plan with continuous evaluation of progress toward goals.

This report summarizes findings of a process evaluation of the work of the Ford High School HSIP committee over the four years of project involvement. The report is based, in part, on results of annual process evaluation questionnaires administered to committee members near the end of each year. It is also based partly on findings of a group interview of members of the committee and an individual interview of the committee facilitator (a member of the Ford High School faculty). These interviews were conducted in May, 1985, by the evaluator from the Evaluation and Testing Department.

Process Evaluation Findings

This process evaluation focused on the following four basic questions:

1. What worked well? (What procedures were especially effective in promoting progress?)

2. What impeded progress? (What procedures, problems, or conditions were troublesome?)

3. How could the process have been improved?

4. What are the most important lessons learned about what makes for an effective school improvement program?

Findings related to these questions are presented below.

What Worked Well?

1. Surveys of the school's total instructional staff and student surveys were very helpful in identifying school problems. Most committee members felt that the committee did a good job of identifying the really important problems.

2. The work of subcommittees of the HSIP committee contributed significantly to productivity.

3. Opportunities for sharing ideas with other project school committees (at special citywide HSIP meetings) were very helpful.

4. Having a facilitator (a member of the committee with a reduced class load) contributed greatly to the successful accomplishment of HSIP work.

5. Devoting some time at department meetings to project concerns promoted involvement of the total staff.

6. A high level of commitment on the part of several committee members contributed greatly to the successful implementation of committee plans.

7. Committee effectiveness was enhanced by the fact that the composition of the committee provided good and balanced representation of the school staff.

8. Meetings of committee members with staff from feeder middle schools facilitated progress toward better high school/ middle school articulation.

What Impeded Progress?

1. Lack of time for planning by the committee and by subcommittees--due, in part, to many conflicting obligations of members to attend other school-related functions.

2. Relatively poor attendance at committee meetings--in many cases due to conflicting obligations.

3. Lack of time for department heads to implement what they learned at inservice training sessions sponsored by the project.

4. Lateness of focus beyond the four original target curriculum areas (English, social studies, mathematics, and science)--causing many in other departments to feel left out.

5. Too few teachers were given the opportunity to attend inservice training sessions on the Essential Elements of Effective Instruction (organized by the central HSIP office).

6. Inservice training sessions for teachers were generally held on the teachers' own time after school hours or only in the summer. This severely limited teacher participation.

7. A central office decision to change the school's social studies curriculum was implemented without adequate provision for purchase of additional textbooks needed.

8. Frequent changes of the school's principal--three served during the operation of the project.

9. Insufficient evaluation of school improvement strategies implemented at Ford High School.

10. Inequitable division of labor among committee members. More could have been accomplished if all committee members carried their fair share of the committee's workload.

11. Intra-group power struggles and attempts by some members to dominate sometimes impeded efforts toward committee consensus.

12. "Too much talk, too little action" was a concern of several committee members.

13. Lack of follow through on committee decisions for action.

14. A perception that the school's administrators too often took a defensive position regarding proposed changes was not uncommon among teacher members of the HSIP committee.

How Could the Process Have Been Improved?

1. Efforts to promote improved teaching and learning would likely have been more successful if more inservice training in effective teaching methods had been provided to more teachers. Some measures which would have helped in this regard are the following:

   a. provision of more inservice training opportunities at the school rather than at other locations.

   b. more inservice training opportunities during school hours.

   c. more funding for payment of stipends for workshop participation.

2. Provision for a few days of staff planning time at the beginning of each school year would facilitate improved HSIP committee planning and more effective involvement of the total staff in school improvement efforts.

3. Greater progress toward project goals could have been made with more involvement of total staff. One way to facilitate such involvement would be to provide for more staff input at departmental meetings. Another way would be to do a better job of sharing information about committee plans and activities with the total staff.

4. A higher level of school staff commitment to the HSIP program would have been attained if top level school system administrators had personally talked to the total school staff regarding their support for the project.

What Are the Most Important Lessons Learned?

There was general agreement among committee members that the following were the most important lessons learned about what makes for a truly effective local school improvement program.

1. Effective local school improvement efforts are much more likely to occur when local school staff identify problems and select improvement strategies than when the improvement program is imposed by central office administration.

2. The effectiveness of school improvement efforts will be determined in large measure by the degree to which total staff, students and parents are committed to the program and its goals.

3. A good facilitator with released time for his/her role is a must for successful operation of a local school improvement program.

4. Strong central and local school administration support are imperative prerequisites for an effective school improvement program.

PTR/fc

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

MUMFORD HIGH SCHOOL

Dr. Mike Syropoulos

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

Introduction

The Detroit Public School's High School Improvement Project was initiated at Mumford and seven other high schools in the 1981-82 school year.

At Mumford High School, a school improvement committee of parents, students, teachers, department heads, administrators, a representative of the Evaluation and Testing Department, a representative of the region office and a representative of the Wayne County Intermediate School District (WCISD) was established to plan and coordinate project activities.

Many members of each high school committee attended many workshops dealing with school effectiveness research before they began to work in their school settings.

During the training, the following major steps were highly recommended for each committee to follow for the success of the project. They are:

(1) Problem identification, analysis and prioritization;
(2) Study of relevant research on effective schools and effective teaching;
(3) Selection of problem solution strategies;
(4) Development of a school improvement plan; and
(5) Implementation of the plan with continuous evaluation of progress toward goals.

The HSIP committee met once a month for one hour per meeting. Parents and students didn't participate after the first year, although attempts were made to involve both parents and students in the project.

Several kinds of evaluation services were provided to the HSIP committee members during the four year period by the support staff evaluator, region/area representative, and WCISD consultant assigned to Mumford High School. These were:

a. Several articles on relevant research on effective schools and effective teaching were distributed and explained almost in every meeting.

b. Student test data were provided upon request every year of the project.

c. Services in the development of the school improvement plan were provided.

d. During the third year, the evaluator audited and made suggestions for improvement of the plan.

e. The last two years the evaluator made a complete needs assessment based on surveys of Mumford's instructional and non-instructional staff, students and parents. Each year a report was written and submitted to the HSIP committee.

f. At the end of each project year, a process evaluation survey was administered to all the members of the HSIP committee. A report on results was written and reported to the school.

g. At the end of the fourth year, the evaluator had twelve (12) individual interviews with teachers, and administrators, and a focus interview with the total committee regarding the project over the four year period.

The process evaluation focused on three basic questions: (1) What worked well, (2) What did not work well, and (3) How could the HSIP process have been improved. The results of the three questions are presented below:

1. What worked well?

On the basis of end-of-project interviews with most of the members of the HSIP committee, the focus interview with the total HSIP committee, and the results of the four annual process evaluation questionnaires, the following were singled out as the contributing factors for the success of the HSIP team.

a. Brainstorming and group discussions by the committee to identify school problems.

b. Staff, student, and parent surveys to identify school problems as perceived by each group.

c. Articulation meetings with the feeder middle schools to discuss mutual problems.

d. Development and implementation of achievement plan of each department.

e. Utilization of test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupil achievement of basic skills.

f. Many of the members continued to serve on the committee throughout the four years.

g. The team was composed of hard working and dedicated teachers, department heads and administrators who worked hard throughout the four years.

h. Region and WCISD consultants were very dedicated people who helped the HSIP team during the first two years.

i. The various in-service training meetings the members attended throughout the four years.

2. What did not work well?

From the same sources, the following were cited as the areas that impeded progress:

a. Committee members did not attend the meetings regularly.

b. Lost many members during the duration of the project.

c. Many times meetings were used for gripe sessions which developed a negative tone and hindered progress.

d. One hour meetings once a month were not adequate.

e. Meetings could have been better organized.

f. Difficulty in getting cooperation of entire staff.

g. Not enough participation by committee members.

h. Difficulty in coming to a consensus on ways of solving problems.

i. Many times matters over which the committee had no control were discussed.

j. Most of the meetings were strictly informational--no actions were taken in relation to HSIP.

k. Specific jobs/tasks were not adequately identified especially the last two years.

3. How could the HSIP process have been improved?

From the same sources cited earlier, the following changes that could have improved the HSIP process were suggested by the HSIP members:

a. The committee should be composed of the following:

1. Two top administrators.
2. All the department heads.
3. One teacher from each department selected by his peers to represent them.
4. Teacher union representative.
5. Four students of leadership quality--one student representing each grade.
6. Three parents from the parent executive board.

b. Schedule of meetings should be set at the beginning of the year and followed as prescribed.

c. The committee should be divided into sub-committees. Each one should be responsible for one problem area and meet more often.

d. Each teacher representative should inform his/her department members of everything that is going on.

e. Each student representative should inform his representative group on a regular basis.

f. The parent representatives should inform their group in their monthly meetings.

g. Each meeting should have a written agenda and the committee should stick to the agenda. Have meeting minutes from the previous meeting for all members.

h. Sharpen delineation of administrative facilitator, and committee chairmen responsibilities.

i. Agree on a philosophy of the school--have principal articulate this and set priorities consistent with the philosophy.

j. Each sub-committee should select a chairman, and under his/her leadership goals and objectives should be developed.

k. The HSIP committee should inform the school staff of all the goals and objectives. Organize the school staff to work as a team for one common goal.

l. Responsible involvement of all members. Better line of communication to teaching and non-teaching staff.

Finally, a program is only as effective as the persons who must implement that program. Ths HSIP committee should continue to communicate its program-- goals, objectives, concerns and activities to the total staff.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

PERSHING HIGH SCHOOL

Carolyn Brown

Office of Instructional Improvement
Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

PERSHING HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PROCESS EVALUATION

Introduction

The Detroit Public Schools' High School Improvement Project was initiated at Pershing High School in the 1981-82 school year. A school improvement committee of teachers, department heads and the school principal, was established to plan and coordinate project activities. The committee's work involved the following major steps:

(1) Problem identification, analysis and prioritization;
(2) Study of relevant research on effective schools and effective teaching;
(3) Selection of problem solution strategies;
(4) Development of a school improvement plan; and
(5) Implementation of the plan with continuous evaluation of progress toward goals.

This report presents findings of an evaluation of the process employed by Pershing's High School Improvement Project (HSIP) committee over the four years of operation of the project. The report is based on responses of the committee members to an "HSIP Process Evaluation Questionnaire" administered annually at the end of each year of the project's operation. Interviews of committee members and bi-monthly facilitator reports also served as sources of evidence for the evaluation.

Findings

A. WHAT WORKED WELL?

- Sharing ideas and problem solving in program planning meetings.
- Utilization of test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupil achievement of basic skills.
- Brainstoriming and group discussions.
- Surveys of staff and students to identify problems.
- Cooperation among committee members.
- Open discussions by committee members to solve identified problems.
- Facilitator leadership was positive.
- Principal leadership was supportive.

B. WHAT IMPEDED PROGRESS?

- Lack of time; more time was needed for projects, activities and meetings.
- Insufficient incorporation of research into practical planning to improve achievement.
- Difficulty in coming to a consensus on ways to solve problems.
- Personality conflicts
- Lack of implementation of committee plans.
- Principal's opposition to ideas.
- Difficulty prioritizing focus areas.
- Diffculty in getting cooperation of entire staff.
- Monitoring project activities was time consuming.
- Project documentation was incomplete.

C. HOW COULD THE HSIP PROCESS HAVE BEEN IMPROVED?

The following suggestions were made by committee members:

- Inviting parents to be members of the HSIP team.
- Including students in all facets of the HSIP process.
- More school time for HSIP workshops, seminars, etc.
- Exploring ways to use and implement technology in the curriculum.
- More involvement of parents and interested community members.
- Better subcommittee organization.
- Stronger backing by school administration.
- Define clearly committee members' responsibilities.
- More total staff commitment
- Share more research on effective schools/teachers with committee.

The most important lessons that committee members felt were learned about what makes for an effective school improvement project were that the following are essential:

a. Total acceptance of school mission by the entire staff.

b. Commitment and cooperation from staff, students, parents and community as well.

c. Support from central staff.

d. Ongoing evaluation feedback.

e. Total staff participation and cooperation in setting goals and objectives.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

DENBY HIGH SCHOOL

Dr. Mike Syropoulos

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Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

Introduction

The Detroit Public Schools' High School Improvement Project was initiated at Denby and seven other high schools in the 1981-82 school year.

At Denby High School, a school improvement committee of parents, students, teachers, department heads, administrators, a representative of the Evaluation and Testing Department, a representative of the region office and a representative of the Wayne County Intermediate School District (WCISD) was established to plan and coordinate project activities.

Many members of each high school committee attended many workshops dealing with school effectiveness research before they began to work in their school settings.

During the training the following major steps were highly recommended for each committee to follow for the success of the project. They are:

(1) Problem identification, analysis and prioritization;
(2) Study of relevant research on effective schools and effective teaching;
(3) Selection of problem solution strategies;
(4) Development of a school improvement plan; and
(5) Implementation of the plan with continuous evaluation of progress toward goals.

The first year the HSIP committee met twice a month for 3 1/2 hours per meeting. However, during the project period, they had three new principals, three new assistant principals, four new department heads, no parents after the first two meetings, and one year without a facilitator. Despite all the impediments the project was somewhat successful.

Several kinds of evaluation services were provided to the HSIP committee members during the four year period by the support staff evaluator, region/area representative, and WCISD consultant assigned to Denby High School. These were:

a. Several articles on relevant research on effective schools and effective teaching were distributed and explained almost in every meeting.

b. Student test data were provided upon request every year of the project.

c. Services in the development of the school improvement plan were provided.

d. During the third year the evaluator audited and made suggestions for improvement of the plan.

e. The last three years the evaluator made a complete needs assessment based on surveys of Denby's instructional and non-instructional staff, students and parents. Each year a report was written and submitted to the HSIP committee.

f. At the end of each project year, a process evaluation survey was administered to all the members of the HSIP committee. A report on results was written and shared with the committee.

g. At the end of the fourth year, the evaluator had twelve (12) individual interviews with teachers, and administrators, and a focus interview with the total committee regarding the project over the four year period.

The process evaluation focused on three basic questions: (1) What worked well, (2) What did not work well, and (3) How could the HSIP process have been improved. The results of the three questions are presented below:

1. What worked well?

On the basis of end-of-project interviews with most of the members of the HSIP committee, the focus interview with the total HSIP committee, and the results of the four annual process evaluation questionnaires, the following were singled out as the contributing factors for the success of the HSIP team:

a. Brainstorming and group discussions by the committee to identify school problems.

b. Staff, student, and parent surveys to identify school problems as perceived by each group.

c. Articulation meetings with the feeder middle schools to discuss mutual problems.

d. Discussions by the committee members to form sub-committees to solve identified problems.

e. Development and implementation of achievement plan of each department.

f. Utilization of test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupil achievement of basic skills.

g. Many of the members continued to serve on the committee throughout the four years.

h. Subcommittees worked on chosen identified problem areas; worked very hard on developing plans to achieve goals and objectives in those areas.

i. The team was composed of hard working and dedicated teachers, department heads and administrators who worked hard throughout the four years.

j. Region and WCISD consultants were very dedicated people who helped the HSIP team during the first two years.

k. The various in-service training meetings the members attended throughout the four years.

2. What did not work well?

From the same sources, the following were cited as the areas that impeded progress:

a. Lack of continuation of top administrators.

   1. Three principals in four years.
   2. Three assistant principals in four years.

b. Committee members did not attend the meetings regularly.

c. Lost many members during the duration of the project.

d. Many times meetings were used for gripe sessions which developed a negative tone and hindered progress.

e. One hour meetings once a month were not adequate (the last two years).

f. Meetings could have been better organized.

g. Committee members not attending meetings regularly.

h. Difficulty in getting cooperation of entire staff.

i. Not enough participation by committee members.

j. Difficulty in coming to a consensus on ways of solving problems.

k. Many times matters over which the committee had no control were discussed.

l. Most of the meetings were strictly informational—no actions were taken in relation to HSIP.

m. Specific jobs/tasks were not adequately identified especially the last two years.

3. How could the HSIP process have been improved?

From the same sources cited earlier, the following changes that could have improved the HSIP process were suggested by the HSIP members:

a. The committee should be composed of the following:

1. Two top administrators.
2. All the department heads.
3. One teacher from each department selected by his peers to represent them.
4. Teacher union representative.
5. Four students of leadership quality—one student representing each grade.
6. Three parents from the parent executive board.

b. Schedule of meetings should be set at the beginning of the year and followed as prescribed.

c. The committee should be divided into sub-committees. Each one should be responsible for one problem area and meet more often.

d. Each teacher representative should inform his/her department members of everything that is going on.

e. Each student representative should inform his representative group on a regular basis.

f. The parent representatives should inform their group in their monthly meetings.

g. Each meeting should have a written agenda and the committee should stick to the agenda. Have meeting minutes from the previous meeting for all members.

h. Sharpen delineation of administrative facilitator, and committee chairmen responsibilities.

i. Agree on a philosophy of the school--have principal articulate this and set priorities consistent with the philosophy.

j. Each sub-committee should select a chairman, and under his/her leadership goals and objectives should be developed.

k. The HSIP committee should inform the school staff of all the goals and objectives. Organize the school staff to work as a team for one common goal.

l. Responsible involvement of all members. Better lines of communication to teaching and non-teaching staff.

Finally, a program is only as effective as the persons who must implement that program. The HSIP committee should continue to communicate its program--goals, objectives, concerns and activities to the total staff.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

SOUTHEASTERN HIGH SCHOOL

Charles A. Green

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Evaluation and Testing Department
Detroit Public Schools

October 1985

SOUTHEASTERN HIGH SCHOOL
PROCESS EVALUATION REPORT
1981 - 1985

The first meeting of the Southeastern High School Improvement Committee was held in December, 1981. Since that initial meeting, the committee has met at least once a month during the four year life of the project. The operations and activities of the committee involved the following steps: (1) problem identification, analysis and prioritization; (2) study of relevant research on effective schools and effective teaching; (3) selection of problem solution strategies; (4) development of a school improvement plan; and (5) implementation of the plan with continuous evaluation of progress toward goals.

One of the several kinds of evaluation services provided to the Southeastern HSIP Committee by a member of the Evaluation and Testing Department has been process evaluation services. This service has occurred throughout the four year span of the project. This final process evaluation report is based partly on results of annual process evaluation questionnaires administered to members of the Southeastern HSIP Committee at the end of each school year from 1981-82 through 1984-85. It is also based, in part, on data obtained in eight interviews of individual members and a focused group interview of the entire committee. The interviews were conducted by the evaluator in May, 1985.

The growth and development of the Southeastern HSIP Committee seemed to follow the pattern of most newly formed committees. During the first year, the committee of 29 members was quite enthusiastic, cooperative, and involved in the committee and sub-committee activities. The leadership from the principal and facilitator was dynamic. However, by the third year, several

members seemed to be less enthusiastic, and by the fourth year, only a few of the original members were participating in committee work. Transfers, promotions, and lack of interest were some of the reasons for a dwindling committee. The facilitator was also promoted and left the school at the end of the third year.

During the fourth year, the principal and the new facilitator continued to be energetic and provided effective leadership, but with fewer members participating in committee work than before. However, as a result of the work and planning of the committee, several positive improvements and changes occurred at Southeastern High School.

What Worked Well

There were several reasons for the successes of the committee in developing plans, strategies, and the implementation of those plans, policies and strategies. First of all, the principal and facilitator were committed, and set the tone for the committee by their enthusiasm and effective leadership. Thus, the committee was motivated, worked hard, and was cooperative during the planning sessions.

The plans and strategies of the committee were shared with the staff at principal's meetings, departmental meetings, and through a weekly bulletin. As a result, the staff became aware of what needed to be done, and the goals and objectives of the committee.

The first year of committee operations ended with a two day staff retreat at the Columbiere Center in Clarkston, Michigan. This retreat was credited by many staff members as being instrumental in bringing the staff together as a unit, also motivating the staff to bring about positive changes at Southeastern. Committee members also felt the various workshops at the Vocational/

Technical Centers were helpful in the interchange of ideas with members of the HSIP committees of the other seven project schools. This interchange was said to have motivated the thinking of the committee in the planning and the development of strategies for positive change.

Members also felt that information from the yearly-administered staff and student questionnaires was helpful in modifying staff attitudes about the problems at Southeastern, and in supplying necessary information for the decision making process.

What Impeded Progress

Although there were several things that worked well for the committee in obtaining their goals and objectives, several members complained about procedures and activities that impeded progress. Some procedures that were said to have impeded progress were:

(a) The meeting time for the committee was not convenient for all members.

(b) There were several needless disputes.

(c) Committee meetings were sometimes repetitive.

(d) There was too much digression and lack of ability to seriously discuss issues of importance and substance. There was also too much time with trivia.

(e) There was too much planning and talking about the plan; too little implementation.

(f) There were not enough active members. After a few sessions, the active members of the committee were overburdened with work.

(g) The constant rejection (by some committee members) of ideas that were different from their apparently preconceived notions of what is and how things should be done, i.e., their way or not at all.

(h) There were several troublesome problems that impacted on the committee. Members complained about the slow process to get people to understand how the project works. Some members were concerned about the bureaucracy, saying that it takes awhile to get things started. Other concerns were the lack of staff input, the inability to keep students involved, much talking but little follow-up of suggestions, faculty not willing to work things out, and lack of community and parent involvement.

How Could the HSIP Process Have Been Improved?

Members felt that the HSIP process could be improved by committee members selecting an area to work on, meeting with the people involved in that area, then meeting with the staff, and then introducing the plan to the school.

Some members felt that the leadership should give more directions to members on the committee. Other members felt that committee members should attend every meeting. Also, all department heads and other key staff members should be required to serve on the committee.

Other suggested improvements were:

1. Improve the communication between the committee and the entire staff.
2. Give better information on committee meeting dates.
3. Have combined workshops with other schools.
4. Send out agendas earlier so that members could be prepared to offer specific opinions or give pertinent information to the committee.
5. Eliminate persons who always tend to react in judgement toward contributions of others.
6. Assure more serious involvement from parents and community people.